THE STORY OF MY LIFE

RICHARD TEMPLE, 1846

(*From a Painting by Faulkner*)

The Story of My Life

BY

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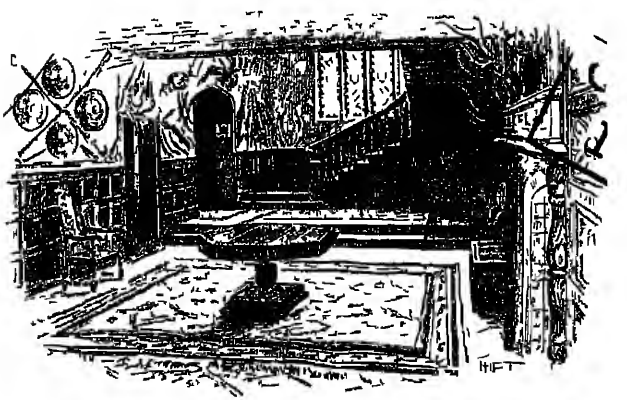

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PREFACE

THE writing of a life's story ought hardly to be undertaken unless some reasons can be assigned for the performance of such a task My reasons are in this wise

From 1848 to 1880 I served the East India Company and the Crown as a Covenanted Civil servant in British India and in all the provinces of that Eastern Empire From that term of thirty-two years about three may be deducted for furlough in England, leaving twenty-nine of downright work Of these twenty-nine years, the first thirteen were spent in rising from the initial grade of the Civil service to what was virtually a governing position The remaining sixteen years were spent in positions of that rank and character Thus I was fortunate in climbing rapidly up the steps of the ladder in a comparatively short time, and then in remaining at or near the top for the greater part of my official days

During these sixteen years I governed about one hundred and fifteen millions of British subjects, a

goodly portion of the Asiatic population, perhaps an appreciable fraction of the human race For five of these years I conducted the finances of British India, with a revenue of fifty-five millions sterling annually according to the then valuation of the rupee, and with an exchequer then reckoned as among the large exchequers of the Nations I personally supervised, and commanded in the field, the operations for the Relief of Famine for two occasions on a gigantic and unprecedented scale I governed, at different times, the Provinces which included both the capital cities, Calcutta and Bombay—a peculiar, perhaps an unique, circumstance

Returning to England in 1880, I entered on a contest in the General Election, without a day's delay after landing I did not succeed in entering Parliament till 1885, but I remained there to the middle of 1895 I went through four contested elections, winning three of them. Sitting for ten years in the House of Commons and during three Parliaments, I took part in nearly three thousand divisions For the Parliament that sat from 1886 to 1892, my attendance, measured statistically, exceeded that of any Member official or unofficial During the same ten years I represented the City of London in the School Board for London, winning my seat in three School Board elections, and conducting the Board's finances Further, I have been brought in contact with the Government Offices, the

principal Chambers of Commerce, the great public bodies and institutions of England

Thus in a term of forty-seven years, 1848 to 1895 inclusive, twenty-nine have been spent in Anglo-Indian service, three on furlough in England, and fifteen in purely British politics Further, during the last fifteen years I have travelled nearly all over the Continent of Europe, the Dominion of Canada, and the northern division of the United States, at times specially suited for studying the politics of those regions

If all this should seem to make up any sum total of achievement, I do not claim any credit on that account, having only desired to do my best in whatever my hand found to perform, in whatever lot may have been assigned to me, whether it were the gift of destiny, or whether happy chance threw it in my way—*seu fatum accesserit, seu fors obtulerit* I purpose merely to show how it all came about The chapter of accidents, great in most countries, is greater still in India I naturally trusted to that, though I had fixed ideas in my inner mind In fact, while some positions, to which I had looked forward, were attained by me, yet the chief events of my advancement in life were unexpected and came on me by surprise

There were seven statesmen to whom I owe the principal steps in my career, who made me what I was, and respecting whom I must not omit any opportunity of declaring my gratitude, namely John (Lord)

Lawrence, James Wilson (the Economist), Earl Canning, the Earl of Northbrook—in India, Sir Stafford Northcote (Earl of Iddesleigh), the Duke of Argyll and the Marquis of Salisbury—in England

From my story it will perhaps be inferred that there must be much of brightness in Anglo-Indian life So there is, indeed, despite hardships and drawbacks—for those who make the best of their chances, who like bees extract honey from every Eastern flower, who preserve their health by bodily exercise, by temperance and by self-command

Though my narrative may throw light on the progress of India during a most eventful generation, yet no regular description of the country is attempted, for that has been given in my book "India in 1880" Again, though my life must touch the lives of many great men by association with whom I was honoured, no portraiture of them is undertaken, for that has been essayed in 1882 by my work "Men and Events of my time in India," also in two biographical memoirs of Mr Thomason and Lord Lawrence In these and other published works I have described mainly what happened to others In this work I describe what befell myself, mentioning circumstances which may have an interest of their own, and which if not mentioned by me must perish from memory So the story is personal, my individuality being always kept in view

Nor do I describe the House of Commons as I saw

it, with the men who figured there before my eyes, that I have striven to accomplish in my book "Life in Parliament" This present work sets forth how I fared individually in that assembly, what I was engaged in, how I threaded my way through the maze of Party politics, how I laboured together with my immediate friends

The interest of my story may consist in this that many will like to learn how a young man landing in India without any influential connection, and without any social advantage beyond the ordinary degree—may approach "the big tree" of promotion, scale its trunk, reach its stately limbs and ascend to its topmost branches Some will care to note how he may bear himself on these giddy heights, how he may grasp the fleeting opportunities of doing good in his generation, how he may grapple with obstacles to the improvement of the people under his charge, how he may strive to exemplify the benevolence as well as the energy of Britain All this indeed concerns those who have their battle in life to fight Others, again, will care to know how a mature man, with a reputation from the East, may land in England and have to go to school once more, to prove his credentials afresh, to gather new experience in fields where his old experience counts for nothing, to feel his way with British electors, and, settling down into comradeship with the Private Members on the benches of the House of Commons,

may engage in contests as hard as those which had occurred in service abroad

The narrative, in order to be life-like, must have local colouring My adventures have been amidst some of the finest portions of the earth—the ruins and vestiges of antiquity in close juxtaposition with grand works of modern enterprise—the sky-piercing Himalaya—the flooded rivers East and West—the Rocky Mountains—the fairest cities, Constantinople, Cairo, Moscow, San Francisco—the northernmost capes of Europe facing the Arctic ocean — the prairie tablelands of North America—the lakes sometimes like mirors amid the mountains, sometimes surging as inland seas — the storm-beaten Atlantic—the Pacific shimmering like molten gold—the resonance of the loftiest and the broadest cascades—the moonlight at Sunium, in Ajalon, on the Alhambra, in the Yosemité valley I may allude to such scenes with confidence, having painted them all either in oil or in water-colour

The word-painting also relates to places where men do congregate—to the ordinances and ceremonies in the Christian churches of Europe—to the torchlight processions in the political elections of America—to the gala holidays of the Hindus—to the solemn festivals of Moslem sectaries

The career as now depicted is so many-sided and its conditions are so multiform, that care has been needed to ensure conciseness and to select those points alone

which are truly characteristic Above all I have striven for simplicity, as my ambition was restrained by patient diligence and guided by the example of the good men around me—in remembrance of the poet's words—

> We have not wings, we cannot soar,
> But we have feet to scale and climb
> By slow degrees, by more and more,
> The cloudy summits of our time
> * * * *
> The heights by great men reached and kept
> Were not attained by sudden flight
> But they, while their compatriots slept
> Were toiling upwards in the night

Further, I always recollected the classical line which we learned at school,

αἰὲν ἀριστεύειν καὶ ὑπείροχον ἔμμεναι ἄλλων

I paraphrased it myself thus—always strive to excel in whatever you undertake and to win in open competition The son of an English country gentleman, I took out to the East the traditions of rural life in England, and religiously brought them back with me Indeed, they still underlie all my cosmopolitan experience Thus, dwelling in my ancestral home I look back on a busy life in many climes, thankful for all that I have been permitted to see, to hear and to do

R T

The Nash, Kempsey, near Worcester

May 1896

CONTENTS

CHAPTER XI

(1874)—THE BENGAL FAMINE

CHAPTER XII

(1874-79)—THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL

CHAPTER XIII

(1887)—DEPUTATION TO THE MADRAS PRESIDENCY

THE STORY OF MY LIFE

CHAPTER I

(1826–1846)—EARLY LIFE

Birth and descent—The Nash, near Worcester—Rugby days—Dr Arnold, head master—Dr Tait—Mr Bonamy Price—Distinguished schoolfellows—Rugby football—Results of school training—Education imparted by my father—Choice of a profession—The Covenanted Civil Service of India—Life at Haileybury College—Extraneous and self imparted education—Voyage to Egypt—Desert route to Suez—Voyage onwards by Ceylon to Bengal—Stop at Kedgeree on the river Hooghly

I WAS born in the village of Kempsey, near Worcester, on the 8th of March, 1826. By the female line I was descended from the second Sir William Temple, who flourished during the reigns of the Georges. In the middle of the last century he acquired the house and property of The Nash, in the Kempsey parish, an old place built in Elizabethan fashion, which is full three hundred years old, and now belongs to me. He was by collateral descent related to the first Sir William Temple, who was eminent in the reigns of the Stuarts. Thus I was one among the inheritors—now become few—of the associations of the Temple family, whose members have in several generations frequently received

honours from the Crown. My mother was daughter of James Rivett-Carnac, younger son of Thomas Rivett, Member of Parliament and High Sheriff for Derbyshire in 1745, and a cadet of the manorial family of Ryvet of Suffolk, which for several centuries held possessions in, and furnished members of Parliament for that county up to 1836, when Brandeston Hall—their house since 1480—passed out of the family. Mr. Rivett's daughter Elizabeth married General Carnac, Member of Parliament for Leominster, and at one time Commander-in-Chief in India. She became the subject of Sir Joshua Reynolds' celebrated picture of Mrs. Carnac. He, dying without issue, devised his property to his brother-in-law, Mr. James Rivett, on the condition of his assuming the name and arms of Carnac in addition to those of Rivett.

My mental constitution is partly derived from my mother, and her untimely death was one of the sorest calamities I have ever suffered. My grandfather Mr. John Temple, a man of financial knowledge and of literary tastes, lived in Town, and let The Nash to a gentleman farmer. The old place had been much maltreated, the oaken panelling of its dining-room had been painted sky-blue, its drawing-room had been turned into a storehouse for apples from the surrounding orchards. My father, Mr. Richard Temple, succeeding to the ownership in 1830, restored its picturesqueness and made it comfortable for habitation.

My first school was a private one at Wick near Worcester, amidst hop gardens with vistas overarched by festoons and stretching down to the Severn bank My earliest schoolfellow was young Lechmere (afterwards Sir Edmund), to whom I shall revert later on

At thirteen years of age, in 1839-40, I went to Rugby School, then flourishing under the famous Dr Arnold Of the many great personalities I have met with, he was among the greatest He has been justly called "a hero schoolmaster" His granite character, his clarion voice, his joyousness in physical exercise, his sternness against evil, his tender and touching sermons, —caused him to be revered by the boys at large The sense of humour, common to great men, was in him keen, though subdued There are those who remember the momentary flash that would light up his countenance when some absurd blunder was committed The method by which he governed the School, and inspired each youth with a sense of responsibility for influencing others in a right direction—won for him the admiration of many young men who by their conduct in after life proved their right to judge of human merit He formed the elder boys into a Sixth Form of Prepositors, investing them with authority in the School, and thus making young men of them Never shall I forget the thrill when, in 1842, having just come home for the summer holidays, I heard in the street of Worcester the news of his sudden death at Rugby from *angina*

pectoris How eagerly did I, in the following autumn, watch Dr Tait (afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury) preach to us his first sermon in the very pulpit where Dr Arnold used to stand! His words found an echo in our young breasts He adverted to the mighty dead—he remembered whose place he was filling—he felt like one who, when the pilot has been stricken, was suddenly called to guide the ship amidst the boiling sea

The master to whose house I belonged, and to whom intellectually I owed the most, was Mr Bonamy Price—a "double first" at Oxford in classics and mathematics, and afterwards Professor of Political Economy at Oxford Next after him, I was chiefly indebted to Mr Cotton, who was subsequently Bishop of Calcutta

In those days Arthur Stanley, afterwards the famous Dean, and Matthew Arnold visited us occasionally as ex-scholars Among my schoolfellows were Valpy Ffrench, afterwards Bishop of Lahore, Sandford, afterwards Bishop of Gibraltar, Parry and Stamer, who both became Suffragan Bishops, Bradley, subsequently Master of University College Oxford and now Dean of Westminster, Conington, the translator of Virgil, Sandars, afterwards of the "Saturday Review," Lawrence the novelist, W S Seton-Karr, a distinguished Civil Servant in the East, Hodson of Hodson's Horse, Walrond of the Education depart-

ment, Hansard of Bethnal Green, Pelly of Oriental diplomacy, J W Sherer and H G Keene, who both served in the East and laboured in the field of letters, and T D Forsyth, who won honour in India Besides these, the names of Dallas, Orlebar, Allgood, Pell, afterwards of parliamentary fame, and others are mingled with my happy recollections Of all my schoolday friends Hayward was the nearest, he subsequently took Holy Orders The first boy to whom I sat next on the school-benches was William Delafield Arnold, son of our head-master, who attained literary and administrative distinction in India, and whom early death snatched from a brilliant career The most noteworthy boy in my class, or form, was Waddington, afterwards Prime Minister and Ambassador of France He had just come from Paris, we taught him English, and he helped us in our readings of Voltaire's histories My closest companion was Warburton, who afterwards became an ornament of the Church

My Rugbeian career can be realised by anyone who reads "Tom Brown's Schooldays" That novel is veritably a sketch from schoolboy nature I and many others lived just the life therein depicted Thomas Hughes, who wrote it afterwards, was then near the top of the school, and I admired him as a young Apollo with his auburn locks and his green cutaway coat Cricket I loved, and in that I had the onerous post of back-stop against the swift bowling I rejoiced in the

exercise with the swing amidst the trees of our island, for that was a test of nerve But football I adored, indeed the marshalling of both sides, with distinctive jerseys for a match, seemed to me like a Homeric array of Greeks and Trojans I liked to grind my way through the closely packed scrimmage, to play first on my side, running all risks of being hacked on the shins from the front or tripped up from behind, to join the ugly rush upon the enemy's goal A certain kick of the ball over a goal by Wahlond junior was a wondrous feat which still clings to my recollection

My ambition, like that of others, was to construe classical passages into accurate yet stately English—to recite from memory a book of the Æneid—to compose Latin verse *longo intervallo* after the Virgilian model—to translate passages of Shakespeare into Greek iambics Mr Lingen from Oxford was our examiner in this composition, he is now Lord Lingen, and I think he must have some of our youthful essays among his archives The Masters used to set us a task called "The Vulgus," which was to write a Latin epigram of four or six lines Having the knack of composition I used to write several of these on the subject in hand, the best one of them I would present to the Master on my own account, the others I would give to my immediate friends to save them the trouble of composing Being a small boy when Dr Arnold died I never, to my everlasting regret,

came under his direct instruction As a big boy I with my compeers were instructed by Dr Tait

I followed the valuable instruction that was given in History ancient and modern I acted on Arnold's advice that this should be based on Geography That wise combination was profitable to me in after life

The fagging though mild was troublesome, I regard it as a time-honoured abuse Bullying, though not frequent, did sometimes occur in a severe form The sharpest chastisement that Dr Arnold ever inflicted was for this offence He alluded to the matter most forcefully in one of his sermons When I and my fellows rose to the Sixth Form and became Prepositors, we, knowing exactly how the evil arose in our early days, took care that none of our juniors should be worried

On a retrospect we may ask ourselves whether this Rugby education was suitable for our future careers It certainly was suitable for mine in most, if not in all, respects For my work in after life it almost amounted to technical education It had its defects, however, even for me, for example it taught us next to nothing of physical science, a deficiency which I had afterwards to make up for myself, as I best could In modern languages, though thorough up to a certain point, it was but rudimentary Morally it had some essential advantages It tended to make a youth grow up into a man of literary culture on the one hand, and a man of action on the other It disciplined the mind and

formed the character It suppressed self-consciousness and hyper-sensitiveness It prepared us to keep our temper in contests, to be good-humoured in disputes, to receive hard knocks with a smiling face and if needful to hit back in return It inculcated thoroughness and manliness, from the moment we left our dormitory to the hour when we laid our weary little limbs to rest

To all this was added the instruction given me at home by my father He was a Whig of the elder school, and taught me to look up to Palmerston as the first of the living Temples Though not aspiring to a political career, he was the type of an English country gentleman In early manhood he rode well to hounds, though he afterwards gave that up in order that I might take his place He was a good Yeomanry officer, a competent Magistrate and a diligent Poor-law Guardian In the first place he taught me to ride, when the pony kicked me off, he said that it would harden my tender heart, he had an ex-sergeant of Life Guards to teach me, he would put a penny between my knee and the saddle and so compel me to sit tight, he sent me out hunting with an ex-huntsman to show me how to take fences He would have rendered me, like himself, a capital shot, had not an accident in the Rugby fives-court made the right eye short-sighted and so spoiled my shooting He was a wondrous sketcher in water-colours After my mother's death he

sought solace in travel all round the Mediterranean, often he was in company with Allom, a prince of illustrators, sometimes also with David Roberts, Henry Warren and J D Harding He naturally imparted to me his beautiful art He made me study Ruskin's books, and he caused me to see Turner's studio He could not manage excursions for me on the Continent, but he took me to Beddgelert and Carnarvon, to the ruined castles on the Wye and to Tintern Abbey During a tour among the English Lakes he imbued me with the sentiments of the Lake Poets Though my own practice was to be in pictorial art, he desired that I should appreciate music also Thus at Birmingham he arranged for me to hear the "Elijah" performed for the first time with Mendelssohn himself conducting He used to take me to the Italian Opera, then in its glorious zenith Listening to the young Mario, I felt how grand was the elder Rubini The recollection of Grisi's singing has been a joy to me in all the vicissitudes of my career

He was anxious that I should understand the institutions of my county So I accompanied him to the Quarter Sessions at Worcester, where Sir John Pakington (afterwards Lord Hampton) presided, and to the Assizes where I beheld the noble countenances, and heard the utterances, of Mr Justice Coleridge and Lord Denman

He impressed on me that though he himself had

followed no profession, I, as the eldest of a family (for he had married again), must work for myself During my visits to the Assizes at Worcester I had noticed how Mr (afterwards Mr Baron) Huddleston prosecuted or defended prisoners, and convinced juries So I fancied that this would be the profession for me, thus intending to be a barrister But soon my mother's relations, in the East India Company at Leadenhall Street, offered me a writership, and my father left me unbiassed to decide whether I would go to India or not Meanwhile I had been reading the Life of Warren Hastings, like me a Worcestershire youth I had dared to imagine that, like him, I might go out to the East, with nothing but my active brain and strong will —that afterwards I might in middle age return to Worcestershire having governed the teeming millions of Bengal I thought, too, of the generations of the Temples I should be the first of that blood that ever went to India, and time might show what I could do

Thus at eighteen years of age I left the Sixth Form at Rugby, and entered the East India Company's College at Haileybury in Hertfordshire There I came under a set of instructors second to none in Europe, Henry Melvill the oratorical preacher, Jeremie the gentle and accomplished Dean, Empson, editor of the "Edinburgh Review", Jones the author of works on Political Economy, Horace Hayman Wilson, a giant in Sanskrit learning, Ouseley the Persian scholar,

Eastwick of Oriental fame, Heaviside the Mathematician, yet surviving and Canon of Norwich, Monier Williams still surviving in celebrity and honour But the instruction covered much too large an area of knowledge During a course of two years, we were lectured and examined in Divinity, in Greek and Latin, in Law, in History and Political Economy, in Mathematics, in Sanskrit, Persian, and Hindustani or Urdu, and competition was invited for English essays It were vain to say that all the students followed the whole of this instruction thoroughly Those who would do this—and I did it all with one exception—must have their brains racked, and their health sapped for a time I won the headship of my class, or term as it was called, and kept it to the end, passing out of the college as head student

Each year the visit of the Directors of the East India Company was a red-letter day for us The Chairman was Sir James Hogg, whose speeches were earnest and impressive When I walked up publicly to receive a load of prizes, almost more than I could carry, he told me how glad he was that my father should be present in the assembly to witness my triumph

In addition to the college course, I studied English composition, won a prize for an essay on Marlborough, took a leading part in the college debating society, presided over a literary club, and contributed to a

Haileybury Magazine This practice in English composition proved ultimately of more benefit to me than I could then have anticipated, and stood me in good stead during my career in India At that time Mr Bonamy Price, comparing me with two other Rugbeians entering on Indian service, predicted that they would be men of action whereas I should be a man of thought Though not, I hope, wanting in thoughtfulness, I was in reality disposed to action

In those days I treated myself to some extraneous instruction, first in geology, one of my fellow students being the son of a geologist, and secondly in the economics of that time I used to attend in London the meetings of the Anti-Corn Law League, then in the height of its activity I listened to the sonorous eloquence of W J Fox, and I heard Cobden make a speech wherein he assured us that, in future, foreign countries would send food to the English people, while England herself would become the workshop of the world I obtained an introduction to Mr (afterwards Sir Charles) Trevelyan, and visited him in the Treasury Chambers, Whitehall, while he was in the throes of the relief work for the famine in Ireland Despite his immersion in that vast business, he found time to tell me of his old experience in India

Before my departure from England I had made up my mind as to what I should, or should not, do beyond

the pursuit of my arduous profession The Rugbeian games would be things of the past for me Success in wild sport, so far as that depended on shooting, would be beyond my power Two things, however, were in my line, I could ride, I could sketch, perhaps even paint These two pursuits would help me in my administrative work, and to them I would give my constant attention

Shortly before the date of my departing, there was a Yeomanry dinner at Kempsey My father as officer formally presented me to his men In reply to their kind words, I boldly expressed my hope of returning one day from the East to command the Yeomanry and to represent some division of Worcestershire in Parliament The first of these two things I never did—though I was later in life offered the command of the Volunteer Artillery But the second I actually did, and that, too, for seven years I went to bid farewell to the Vicar of Kempsey, who had prepared me for confirmation by the Bishop in Worcester Cathedral He was a muscular Christian of the Evangelical type Being an old man, he solemnly took me by the hand and said that we should meet again, not on earth, but in heaven

Lastly, I waited upon the Directors of the East India Company at their parlour in Leadenhall Street The senior of them, the present Colonel Sykes, earnestly adjured me to cherish a lively regard for the Natives of India

I sailed from Southampton in the last days of 1846 by the Peninsular and Oriental Company's steamship "The Ripon" bound for Alexandria During a boisterous passage across the Bay of Biscay, my aspect became so downcast from sea-sickness that (as I learned) two ladies, of high positions in the East, were saying what a pity it was to send so weakly a youth as me to serve in India Perhaps their opinion changed when they saw me ten days afterwards at Cairo For by that time I had been quite restored by the sight of Gibraltar, of Mount Atlas snow-clad, of the Sierra Nevada behind the Malaga coast, of Algiers, of the church of the Templars at Malta, and of the sandy strip that affords the first glimpse of Egyptian land, all this being followed by a night's trip in boats up the Nile Delta At Cairo, having arrived in the morning and being timed to continue our journey in the evening—we had the day before us So I and three others, Haileybury comrades, were inspired by the sight of the Pyramids to take a ride thither and back Elder men warned us that we might lose our passage, however, with horses of Arabian breed and with a mounted dragoman, we resolved to try Riding fast we made good our trip to the Pyramids, and more also Traversing the green belt of Nile cultivation, and crossing the river, mounting the sandy plateau and passing the Sphynx, we got Arabs to give us a helping hand up the masonry of the Great Pyramid, and soon stood on that old-world

summit We rode back in time to see the richly coloured costumes in the streets of Cairo, the famous Mosque of Sultan Hassan and the tombs of the Caliphs Then ascending the terrace of the citadel we looked over Cairo at sunset, a prospect which my father had told me was the finest in Egypt

After this joyous excitement we had a sleepless night, and then a glaring dusty day in transit-vans across the desert to Suez Arriving there in the early night I slept the longest and heaviest sleep I have ever had Sailing again the next day, I met the Lascars or Indian sailors, for the first time on board the steamship "Precursor" In the evening I saw Mount Sinai redden in the sunset light After a few days' sail the volcanic formations of Aden loomed darkly yet majestically on our horizon While our ship was coaling there, the captain took a small party of friends, myself among them, for a little trip on the rock-bound, wave-dashed shore I wrote to my father that we had actually been for a picnic in Arabia Felix

Among my fellow passengers were Mr (afterwards Sir William) Muir, and Mr (afterwards Sir Bartle) Frere, with their families The friendship I then formed with these eminent men was valuable to me throughout my career

A few days more of quiet at sea, and we beheld the reefs, the raging surf, the high-ascending spray, the bending cocoa-nuts of Ceylon Rounding that green

equatorial isle, we turned northwards into the Bay of Bengal Landing at Madras we were tossed about by a surf still more furious I noticed how the Native boatmen, almost naked, showed a pluck that comes from constant movement on the crests of breaking waves On shore I stood reverently beneath the statue of Sir Thomas Munro, whose land-settlement was a matter of history, little dreaming as yet that I should myself rise in my profession by that very kind of work Continuing our voyage to its end, we found the pilot brigs dancing in the swell of the sea near the mouth of the Hooghly Taking a pilot on board we soon entered the dangerous channel of the river, and stopped for a while at Kedgeree to receive despatches from Calcutta Immediately I was introduced to the sad side of Anglo-Indian life, for the captain of our ship received the news of his wife having just died of cholera at Calcutta I learned that tragic scenes had often occurred at Kedgeree from passengers, who had voyaged for months round the Cape to meet a relative, learning here that he or she had died in the meantime

CHAPTER II

(1847)—THE INDIA OF 1847

The East India Company—Its great achievements—Fault in its Native Army—British authority in the country as a whole—The Hindu religion—The area, population, foreign trade and revenue of the Empire—The conditions of Anglo Indian life

WITHOUT attempting even an outline of the Indian Dominion as first seen by me, I will at the outset take a bird's-eye view of the India which I entered in 1847

The day of a national institution is as long as the days of several generations of men So the glorious day of the East India Company was growing late in its afternoon. None thought that such an afternoon as this would be followed by an angry and blood-red sunset The Imperial Corporation had conquered, pacified, ruled, organised, administered vast territories Seeing what has since succeeded it—however good that may be with all the newest progress—we appreciate the grandeur of the old Company about the middle of the nineteenth century according to the lights of that era It had honestly striven to keep itself abreast with the best opinion in England Naturally it had not yet undertaken railways, nor introduced popular State-

education, nor established sanitation, for, these and other improvements were then but imperfectly known in England, though in the Bengal Presidency some beginning with elementary instruction was being made It had not caused municipal life to spring into being It had attempted scientific legislation to a certain extent only—though it possessed an extensive Code of Regulations

But it had suppressed domestic slavery, female infanticide, widow burning, human sacrifices and Thuggee-murdering It had begun road-making on a scale equalled only by a Cæsar or a Napoleon It had planned canals of irrigation, which were subsequently constructed on the grandest scale It had laid the foundation of all that has since been done to secure to the people their property in the land, and to protect tenant right It had set up Courts of Justice, before which all persons and all interests, including the Government itself, should be equal It had organised a European Service, with appointments in the first instance by patronage, but producing men of genius not surpassed by any competitive system that has followed Entering India under the Company, I was to find no inferiority in the conduct of affairs, as compared with what I had left behind me in England Indeed the best ideals I had learned in the West, regarding European policy and conduct, were to be realised in the East

There was indeed a particular weakness in the Company's system, a canker which afterwards proved fatal At this era the fault was suspected by very few or, if suspected, was not overtly indicated It lay in the excessive number of the Indian Armies as compared with the European forces, more than two hundred and fifty thousand of the one to thirty, or at the outside thirty-five, thousand of the other, or eight Native soldiers to one European The perilous nature of this proportion, or disproportion, was scarcely perceived

The Empire had been founded throughout India, including the lower Indus valley namely Sind, but exclusive of the upper Indus basin or the Panjab From the Bay of Bengal to the river Satlej not a shot could be fired without British permission But beyond the Satlej shots could be fired in spite of us, very much indeed, as we soon discovered to our cost

The first Afghan War had injured British prestige in an Empire depending partly, though happily not altogether, on opinion But subsequently, and quite recently, the most martial race in India had been repulsed in a hard fought campaign of sixty days So the impression of British invincibility had once more sunk deep into the Native mind

Across the Bay of Bengal, the coast region, or the outlying provinces of the old Burmese dominion, were now ours But in Burmah Proper or Ava and in the Irawaddy valley, the empire of Alompra still survived

The area of the Indian Empire, including British territories and the Native States, was somewhat less than it is now, though it exceeded one million of square miles The population was, however, less by one-third than what it has since become It was then over one hundred and fifty but under two hundred millions of souls The foreign trade was valued at only twenty-six millions sterling annually, about one-fifth of its annual value nowadays The annual revenues of the State (irrespective of any capital account) amounted to about thirty-seven millions of tens of rupees, in the financial phrase of to-day, which with the rupee at two shillings in the Exchange, was equal to thirty-seven millions sterling There was indeed a National Debt, but it had been incurred for war almost entirely As yet no loans had been raised by the State expressly for the material improvement of the country

There had been some movements, social and religious, in the Hindu mind, and some reformers had arisen But as yet no modern or western education had shaken the Brahminical faith in the hearts of any considerable class of its people

Anglo-Indian life, that is the life led by our countrymen and countrywomen in India, differed widely from that of the present time It was more luxurious than it is now, in outward show, in private entertainments, in the establishment of servants, in equipages, in the number of horses in the stable Otherwise, it was

subject to drawbacks which can hardly be understood by the residents of the present generation The European families had to endure the heat of the plains and the ills of the climate far more then than now The health-resorts in the mountains were few, and those few were imperfectly developed The journey to reach them was so distressing to invalids that the immediate harm might be deemed to outweigh the ultimate benefit Tours for pleasure were rarely contemplated, save by those who could afford a whole winter for leisurely marching Journeys which now require but a day or two, then occupied weeks and weeks, and that, too, with discomfort hardly conceivable by the people of to-day Though river-steamers plied in Bengal, to the great convenience of weakly travellers, still the time consumed was enormous The coasting steamers, which now pass along the shores of the Peninsula, had not yet come into existence Even to the Presidency Towns the land transit would be tedious to those who had to embark for England or for the Colonies Resort to England, either for health or for recreation, was fenced in by grievous disadvantages Consequently those who were obliged to seek a temperate climate for a while had to sail for the Cape of Good Hope or for Australia

CHAPTER III.

(1847)—FIRST YEAR IN INDIA

Approach to Calcutta—The city and its surroundings—My illness and slow recovery—I effect an Exchange from Bengal to the North-Western Provinces—My studies in Calcutta—Journey up country—Visit to Benares—Religious Missions—Onwards to Allahabad—The Meerut cantonment—Am appointed to the Muttra district

As our stately steamship "the Precursor" passed up the river Hooghly from Kedgeree towards Calcutta, in superb weather shortly after New Year's Day 1847—a scene of magic beauty presented itself. Endless groves of cocoa-nut were bending over the edges of the broad stream on either side. The Native boats and country craft, with many varieties of masts, hulls and rigging, were flying, like birds, over the surface. Their sails were shining white against the deep-green foliage. In the suburb of Garden Reach, shrubberies and green slopes stretched down to the brink for several miles. The magnificent Botanic Garden came well in view, and at the end of the vista, the square-rigged, tall-masted, ocean-going ships were seen, like those I remembered in the Pool of the Thames. I had perceived that the river for seventy miles from the sea had been full of buoys to mark the channel, that the

treacherous, indeed fatally dangerous, current could not be navigated for a moment without a pilot who gave a life-time to studying the water-way We then passed close under Fort William famous in history but squat and insignificant in appearance, its power, we were told, lay below the surface in foss, escarp and counterscarp Immediately afterwards our ship was moored alongside the bank A ramshackle conveyance carried me to Spence's Hotel I smiled to myself at the humbleness of my landing in India, and I felt like an insect that has laboriously to ascend the side of a wall The hotel was blank and dreary, but having dined on board ship I had an evening to myself in a bare though well-kept room I at once engaged a Native valet, and verified with him the vernacular names of all the objects around me I took my first night's rest in India under thin gauze curtains as a protection against mosquitoes

The next morning, at the hour of sunrise, I sallied forth, in company with a friend of some little experience, to take a look round the place—but there was no sun A soft white mist lay over the surface of the earth, like a dense London fog, only much clearer Soon the white vapour turned to a golden gauze, thinner and thinner, till it vanished under the sun's rays Then the Mydan, like the green Hyde Park, of Calcutta, lay before me Behind it the Chowringhee line of mansions —like the houses of Park Lane—indicated "the City of

Palaces" But the alluvial flatness of the ground minimised even this grandeur We passed by the Treasury Chambers, the old Government House of Warren Hastings, and the later Government House erected by the Marquis Wellesley, a palatial structure I learned that the Governor-General, Lord Hardinge, was far away in the North-West, and that the honours of Government House were being performed by the President in Council I saw for the first time the Sepoys of the Bengal army, of grenadier height, on guard My friend said that upon these men our dominion largely depended, and that we could scarcely do without them I instinctively winced on hearing this, but could not presume to stem the tide of opinion In the streets I marvelled at the meanness of the Native houses But the crowds, despite the dusky faces, were light, flitting masses, with white red or orange turbans, and white robes to below the knee Their prattle was like the buzzing of insects in a mead on a summer's day They crowded the middle of the streets, in the absence of side-pavement, for wheeled vehicles, and horses were rare Palanquins, or litters borne by men, formed the almost universal conveyance and there were palanquin stands at every corner where the bearers hailed every foot-passenger, like cabmen in London I admired the tree-shaded tanks, without knowing that these limpid waters teemed with the germs of cholera

During the day I reported myself at the college of Fort William, a stately edifice raised in classic style by the Marquis Wellesley I thereon received my orders for instruction as a student in Oriental languages.

My first care was to purchase a riding horse So I repaired to the show-stables, and saw the heavy-turbaned and long-robed Arabian dealers descanting in polished Hindustani phrases on the beauties and merits of their grey Arab steeds, exquisite animals which I now saw for the first time Every day before sunset I used to see strings and strings of carriages and pairs, and of one-horse conveyances, driving to and fro on the river bank alongside the big ships Without making due allowance for circumstances, I uttered the carping observation that the harness and equipages were 'indifferently turned out in comparison with those of Hyde Park Corner!

During our evenings at home, I became but too soon acquainted with the plague of mosquitoes hovering around with a peculiar sing-song and then stinging So vexatious was this that we had to erect, within the library or study, a framework compartment with mosquito-curtains Inside that compartment we used to sit when reading or writing I did not yet understand that this pest was for the most part preventible, as it arose chiefly from the open drains of a capital city At night the streets were but slightly lit, the broad driving roads across the plain of the Mydan were in

darkness, and collisions between vehicles were not infrequent I gathered that these primitive arrangements would one day be superseded by the introduction of gas

My first dinner party was at the table of the Chief Justice, Sir Lawrence Peel, in whom I beheld an exemplar of learning and benevolence Within a few days I met the Bishop of Calcutta Daniel Wilson By way of giving a serious turn to youthful thoughts, he told me that I had come to a land of sickness or death, and that I should hold myself in due preparation This message of his, though far from cheering, did not depress the spirits of those who, like me, had been led by a spirit of adventure to cross the ocean I wrote to my father that the climate was, as yet, very fine and favourable to exertion of mind and body

Afterwards I witnessed the consecration of the new cathedral at Calcutta, on the edge of the Mydan plain with much impressive ceremony This was the first concourse of Europeans which I saw in India, and I was struck by the evangelical, even patriarchal, bearing of the bishop. The only other State function that I attended was at the Medical College, when a speech was made to the Native students by a Member of the Government This opened my eyes to the wide scope of British benevolence in the East Both these functions indicated to me that a fine spirit was moving the public administration

Retaining still my schoolboy's day-dream of Warren Hastings and Bengal, I rapidly acquired proficiency in the Bengali language But events soon occurred to divert me from Bengal and to banish my day-dream, as I vainly thought, for ever I little imagined then that, many years later, the dream would come true and that, after all, my castle in the air would settle itself down on solid earth As the spring season wore on, I was attacked with dysentery, an ailment which I understood to be endemic in Bengal Ere this I had been taking rides and drives all round the capital, amidst bamboo groves, and thatched cottages with clustering creepers, and rice-fields, and gentle inhabitants I soon felt that this was not the India of my history-books—not the land of swelling domes, of tapering minarets, of towering temples—not the land of Eastern song and legend, of martial races, of conquering dynasties So my young heart yearned for the romantic North-West, and for the frontier as a field for enterprise in a bracing air A high Bengal official, to whom I breathed my aspiration, sarcastically remarked, how strange it was that, having already ventured several thousand miles from home by sea, I should want to wander some fifteen hundred miles further inland Opportunely a brother officer—Mr Hodgson Pratt, afterwards distinguished as a philanthropist—occupied a house jointly with me, and had been nominated for the North-Western Provinces He became engaged to be married

to a lady in Calcutta, and it suited him to remain in Bengal So we were allowed by the Government to exchange provinces, or rather divisions of the Empire, and I was gazetted to the North-Western Provinces

Midsummer was now upon us, and being gravely ill, I was unable to bear the wearisome journey necessary to reach my ultimate destination up country So I must, to my chagrin, perforce wait till the autumn I need not describe how the dysentery clung to me through the drought of May and June, and the down-pour of July and August, enfeebling the frame but clearing the brain for study I dragged my weakened limbs through the State Ball at Government House in celebration of the Queen's birthday, with the punkah-fans waving over pale-faced ladies I won degrees of high proficiency in Persian and Hindustani, by way of preparation for service among North-Western people I enlarged my culture by reading Whewell on the natural sciences, and the standard authors on meta-physics At times I solaced hours of sickness by the novels of Walter Scott, Bulwer and Jane Austen In the autumn I recovered mainly through the care and skill of the Presidency Surgeon, Dr Jackson, whose goodness will never be forgotten by me I rejoiced in the prospect of departing from Calcutta, as soon as the roads should be dry enough for travel

Before my departure I had the privilege of meeting Alexander Duff, then the rising Missionary of the Free

Church of Scotland The edifying conversations with him on religious missions, the inspection of his schools, the perusal of his works, gave a fresh impulse to my thoughts which has never been lost to them in all my subsequent life

I saw that the college of Fort William had become an anachronism, that the first year of my life in India was being in part wasted, that I and my fellows ought after landing to have been sent straightway to our respective districts to complete our knowledge of the vernacular by contact with the Natives in official work I looked back on my sojourn in Calcutta as the most cheerless time I had ever known So with every expectancy, I started on a palanquin journey up country

The present generation of Anglo-Indians may scarcely believe what such a journey meant for me in a litter carried on men's shoulders Several hundred miles were to be traversed at the rate of two miles an hour, including stoppages I was to accomplish from twenty-four to thirty miles a day, travelling in the cool hours of the night, and halting in the hot hours of daylight, generally in the solitude of staging rest-houses, and sometimes in the European society of Civil or Military stations I observed the endurance, the temperance, the marching power of the Native bearers who bore my palanquin I rejoiced in the genial and hearty hospitality of my own countrymen in the interior My ear caught the true ring of an Anglo-

Indian welcome My march took me near the battle-field of Plassy, and past Moorshedabad with the still existing phantom of the sovereignty overthrown by Clive Then I approached the wooded hills of Rajmehal and passed by the first ruin I had seen in India Soon I was in a long valley of black loamy mud, not yet dried after the rains I lightened the burden for my palanquin-bearers by trudging on foot The sickly moonlight added to the ghastliness of the morass However, my gallant bearers got themselves and me through it all, and I was thankful to reach a hospitable house at Monghyr My host was a man of practical forethought He warned me that, after having passed through such a morass at the end of autumn, I must expect jungle fever forthwith He defined to me the symptoms to be anticipated, and the steps to be taken The hearing of all this, after fatigue and sleeplessness, did, I confess, cause a sensation to creep up my back Soon afterwards I beheld for the first time the dome of a Moslem shrine So I at once sketched it, wondering when, if ever, I should sketch again No fever super-vened, however, and I went on to Patna the capital of Behar—little thinking that, many years later, Monghyr and Patna would be the scenes of the highest activity of my career On my arrival at Patna about sunrise my kind host put me on horseback, and took me for a gallop in the morning air I drank in the vivifying breeze after the damps of Bengal Thence I proceeded

to Ghazipore—visiting the tomb of the Marquis Cornwallis—and onwards to Benares the end of my palanquin march of six hundred miles My heart beat as I drew near to the centre of the Hindu world The approach to the city then was by a bridge of boats across the Ganges, near the point where the river is now spanned by a railway viaduct

At Benares I met several Missionaries of the Church Missionary Society especially Mr William Smith and Mr Leupolt Under their well-informed guidance I visited temples, the most venerated and popular among the whole Hindu nationality The spectacle would be wonderful to the oldest observer, it was still more so to a newcomer like me The streets were as closely confined as the houses were lofty Between the elevated sides of stone or brick in several stories there would be just a strip of blue sky visible overhead Surging streams of people choked the narrow passages The temples, in place of domes or towers, had sharp-pointed cones of imposing dimensions, and elegant designs Confused objects struck the senses of sight, of hearing and of smell There was a veritable battle of strong-scented flowers With that perfume was mingled the smell of oil poured over idols, images and holy emblems Among the humble worshippers and even commoner folk, besmeared with pigments, there flitted priests and Brahmins with an almost ineffable dignity transmitted from countless generations of predecessors The sacred

bulls, tame with familiarity, poked their way with stumpy horns among the densely packed masses of humanity Above the din of voices there resounded the clang of instruments and the tone of bells I said to myself—if there be a pandemonium on earth, it is here

The next day a far different sight awaited me In company with my missionary friend Mr William Smith, I went early in the morning on board a river-boat up stream on the Ganges just above the city of Benares We were thus to float down the current, and view the river-frontage of the city just before and after sunrise, when the Hindus come down to bathe The high bank was for some miles secured at intervals with vast flights of stone steps On these were crowds of men and women clothed in all the colours of the rainbow, ascending or descending, and dipping their heads, arms, feet and limbs to the knees in the sacred water Above the steps temple after temple arose with towering cone, and palace after palace built there by the piety of Hindu princes and nobles from near and far The tender azure of the morning sky set off the reds and oranges of the stone-work well preserved in a dry climate The agitated surface of the running Ganges afforded tremulous reflections The slanting rays of the newly risen sun caused a play of light and shade on colours in movement, a kaleidoscopic glitter baffling description

In the forenoon my missionary friend went home, leaving me to stay and paint So I found enough shade to sketch by, and depict a graceful group of cone-shaped temples on the ridge of the Ganges bank As the day advanced, my position enabled me to view the burning-place, as it was called, for the cremation of the Hindu dead in the sanctity of the water's edge Hour after hour I looked up from my sketching-block to watch the flames of the funeral pyres ascending I was still more interested to note the litters, carried with reverent care and bearing the sick in mortal extremity to breathe their last almost in the lap of mother Ganges As the afternoon grew late, the sunlight reddened and cast ruddy hues over what had been viewed under the paler lighting of the morn The last object which I noted at sunset was the proud minaret erected by the Moslem Emperor to rear its head like some tall bully, and insult the Hindu faith At nightfall I returned to my missionary friend, saying that this was the finest day of sight-seeing that had yet dawned on my young life

Before leaving Benares, I went with the missionaries to witness their work of preaching and conversing in the highways and byways of the city and its suburbs, to inspect their schools, orphanages and little hamlets of Native Christians, to attend divine service in their churches together with the dusky congregations For the first time I heard the Lord's song being sung by

coloured people in a strange land The knowledge thus acquired, not from reports and hearsay, but from what I saw, heard and felt, on the spot amidst those concerned—gave me at the outset a sympathy with missionary work which has never since been weakened

From Benares onwards my mode of journeying was changed I was now introduced to one-horse vans going six miles an hour, over trunk roads bridged for the most part and metalled So I soon reached the confluence of the Ganges and the Jamna at Allahabad I crossed by the usual boat-bridge, but nowadays the crossing is by a railway viaduct of noble dimensions I was thus inside the North-Western Provinces, my destined field of service So I consulted my kind host, Mr Parry Woodcock, as to what district or Collectorship I should seek for He justly dwelt on the importance of my beginning official life under a first-rate master Thus I decided to apply to serve either under Mr Montgomery of Cawnpore, or Mr Edward Thornton of Muttra I made bold to write to the Private Secretary to the Lieutenant-Governor, Mr Thomason, expressing my anxiety to serve under one or other of these two eminent officers A sympathetic reply came to the effect that I was to be appointed to Muttra So I journeyed onwards along the Grand Trunk Road Halting for a day at Cawnpore, I called on Mr (afterwards Sir Robert) Montgomery, and began a friendship which lasted through life, and will be

adverted to hereafter I was able to diverge and see the military cantonment of Meerut After what I had heard in Calcutta about our power partly resting on Bengal Sepoys, my pulse beat stronger when I saw a regiment of dragoons marching to church, and the famous 32nd exercising on the parade-ground

Then proceeding to Muttra, I reported myself to Mr Edward Thornton I was now on the threshold of an active career, having been just one year in India Though much had been seen and learnt by way of preparation, I yet regretted that nothing had as yet been done by me So I vowed inwardly that if this had been the first, it should also be the last year of inaction

CHAPTER IV

(1848-50)—THE NORTH WESTERN PROVINCES

Mr Edward Thornton and the Muttra district—Visit to Bhurtpore—Beginning of official life—Registration of landed tenures—European society at Muttra—Recreation in the hot season—Visit to Agra—Mr Thomason the Lieutenant Governor—Mr William Muir—Memory of the Mogul Emperors—My life in tents—Magisterial business—Political temper of the Natives—I leave Muttra for Allahabad—My work at Allahabad under Mr Robert Lowther—My marriage—Camp life in the interior—Offer from the Panjab accepted—Travel by the Grand Trunk Road—First sight of the Himalaya—Entrance to the Panjab

AT Muttra, in the winter of 1848, I was fortunate in having Mr Edward Thornton as my first official master He belonged to a family well and honourably known, the Thorntons of Clapham He was religious, thoroughgoing in all affairs, studious respecting Native ideas and customs, always on horseback at sunrise overlooking the things under his charge He caused me to see everything with my own eyes, and not through the spectacles of others He took me for rides in the early mornings, sometimes through the large city, sometimes round the neighbouring villages He bade me sit at his side in Court, to hear how he gave orders or decisions There were frequent Native festivals in picturesque places I accompanied him to see these,

and he sketched in water-colours as much as I did Round the tanks there were canopies of almost perennial leafage, and the holiday-makers combined brightness with quality of colour in their costumes to a degree unseen by me in Europe Thus I soon learned to love the land in which I was to labour

I paid my first visit to a Native sovereign prince, by making a short trip to Bhurtpore in the neighbourhood of Muttra I went through the Oriental ceremonials of the court there, witnessed an illumination reflected on the surface of a great tank, saw a fight of beasts, one ram butting against another, one rhinoceros struggling with another in unwieldy conflict

Muttra was a good standpoint for my observation It lay between the sister capitals of the Moslems, Agra and Delhi, it had seen the track of Mogul armies and the marches of Mogul triumph On the other hand, it was the scene of the most graceful passages in the Hindu mythology, and the ideal place where the young god Krishna, the Hindu Apollo, had danced among the cowherd youths and maidens

I was set to work at once, sitting at first *in camerâ*, so to speak, that is, in a room apart I prepared abstracts of vernacular cases for my superior officers, and so became accustomed to the Native officials My language, learnt at college, was thought somewhat bookish and pedantic But I soon accommodated it to the colloquial style of the Natives about me I was

then able to take my place in open Court, consisting o the plainest whitewashed room I sat on a raise platform with benches below it for the accommodatio of a mixed crowd The people were keenly litigious even in the small cases with which I had to deal, an the vernacular proceedings covered reams of country made paper These documents would be read out b the Native clerks with a distinctness and fluency whic I had never known in any European language dictated my orders to the clerks, which were read ou before being initialled by me In the criminal cases equal to our Petty Sessions cases, the story told by eac witness and his cross-examination by me were recorde verbatim and read out to him before being marked b me as his deposition There was a Native Bar, with two grades corresponding with the barristers an solicitors in England, but junior members only prac tised before a beginner like me

Then Mr Thornton directed me to a work to which I fortunately perceiving its importance, bent my attention It gave momentum to my progress, almost like a star in life, for it was the Registration of landed tenures Indeed it proved to be a turning-point in my career at the very outset In the Muttra district, as in the rest of the country, a herculean operation had taken place named the Settlement, including the determination of the land revenue for thirty years and the registration of all landed tenures Here, as elsewhere, the Registra

tion, as first made, had proved to be defective, so a revision, searching and minute, had to be undertaken This work brought me at once to the root of Native affairs, and to the heart of rural society in a population mainly agricultural The land was generally held by peasant proprietors grouped together into those Village Communities which had become famous in history

Though most of my time was spent among the Natives without any English being spoken, yet I had other European society besides that of my brother Civil Servants three or four in number There were Native troops at the Station with European officers, namely a battery of artillery and the 3rd regiment of Bengal Cavalry When admiring the latter, I little thought what a terrible notoriety they would acquire nine years later in the van of the Mutinies Among my closest friends was a young officer who in later life became distinguished as Sir Charles Brownlow There was a fair proportion of ladies in our social circle The cavalry band used to play to us about sunset twice a week From our Station book-club the monthly numbers of "Dombey and Son," then coming out in a serial, were being circulated How well I recollect one sunset near the band-stand, when the ladies were telling us—fancy, after all, it is Florence Dombey who has proposed to Walter Gay—as if that were the best news of the day by the mail just arrived from England After a moment I reflected that a circumstance like this, several

thousand miles away from home, in the distant interior of a strange land, was such a proof of world-wide popularity as would have gladdened the heart of the novelist

The season advanced but too fast, the spring harvest was reaped and garnered, the sky became like brass and the earth like iron Then I experienced a new phenomenon, for the hot winds began to blow from across the desert that separates India proper from the Indus basin The fiery breeze would freshen till it struck us like a blast from a furnace For this we had a delicious remedy Against our large windows we set mats of scented grass which was wetted and constantly sprinkled with water inside and out The heated wind blew through them and was instantly chilled on the passage Under their cool protection were placed our fruits and other nice things for our tables Though our rooms were thus darkened, they had the perflation of a fragrant zephyr The thing that kept us in health, vigour and alacrity was the swimming bath, spacious and roofed over, to which we resorted before breakfast after our sweltering rides in the sunrise hour My swimming, learned at Rugby, was then indifferent I soon became proficient in that, and in floating too Thus I and others could lie on our backs, with nothing above water but our noses and our toes The test, however, a veritable tug of war, was with inflated pigskins, called *masaks*, floating in the water Each

man rode one of these, like a horseman with a firm seat as on a water-horse, and guided it by paddling with his hands Two sides would be arrayed of men thus mounted, three or four on a side, with a certain distance of water between them On a given signal each side urged its water-steeds against the other, and joined issue, the object of the struggle being that every man should unseat his opponent In one of these struggles I was so submerged that, before returning to the surface, I felt for a moment what must be the sensation of drowning

Then I was invited to visit the Lieutenant-Governor, Mr James Thomason, at Government House in Agra I scanned with curiosity his lofty stature, broad forehead, piercing eye and placid countenance I listened to his gentle yet commanding voice His was the most impressive personality that I had beheld since the death of Dr Arnold He received me with gracious sympathy, and declared that the revised Registration of landed tenures, on which I was engaged, would prove to be of the nearest and dearest import to the Natives He looked carefully over my water-colour sketches of Benares, and asked particularly after the missionaries Indeed he spoke of religious missions with such tenderness, that I felt myself to be in a saintly presence In the evening he took me for a drive with a team of horses, and I delighted in the pace at which the postillions whisked us through the sultry air

Mr William Muir, with his family, was then at Agra and I was glad to renew the friendship formed during our sea-voyage With him I went over the fortress of Agra, raised by Akbar the Great with red sandstone on the bank of the Jamna How little could we imagine that, nine years later, our beleaguered countrymen and countrywomen would be saved by this stronghold from destruction, during emergencies in which Mr Muir himself would play an honourable part!

I was at that moment studying practically the story of the Great Mogul, comprised in the reigns of five mighty Emperors, who formed the greatest dynasty ever seen in Asia since ancient times Having read this story at College as admirably told by Mountstuart Elphinstone, I was now verifying it on the spot I visited the shrine which Akber the Great erected in memory of his philosopher and friend, the palace where he engrafted Hindu ornament on Moslem style to please his Rajput wife, the tomb raised to his memory with the slab of stone, on the flat roof, exposed to the sky and inscribed with the hundred attributes of the deity I entered into the warlike episodes in the life of that gifted and ambitious Empress of Jehangir's, the lady of whom the poet Moore had read I contemplated the domestic life of Mumtaz Muhull, that Empress of Shah-jehan's who, though known only as a wife and a mother, was consigned to deathless renown by the Taj Mausoleum

erected at Agra to her memory I ascended to the balcony whither her dying husband was carried to take his last look at that peerless Taj, the queen-structure of the world, which it is still the desire of all men to behold The tomb of the last of the real Emperors, Aurangzebe, lay far away down south, and I was not to see that for many years to come I followed the work of Akber's Hindu Minister which laid the first foundation of that Land Settlement in which I was then engaged Thus I was treasuring up notions, which not only endeared to me the associations of the country, but also turned my thoughts to administration on a vast scale

Later in the year I found that my name had been brought before Mr John Lawrence (afterwards the renowned Lord Lawrence), who was then administering the territory between the rivers Satlej and Beas, annexed by Lord Hardinge after the first Sikh war I was to be employed in the Land Settlement, much the same as that in which I was then occupied at Muttra, only larger in scope It was suggested that the North-Western Provinces offered no sufficient field for an aspiring man like me! I did not, however accept this the first offer that had been made to me in my career I consulted Mr Thomason, and he advised me to stay yet awhile with him and his, till my training should be completed He remarked that ere long some better opportunity would arise of crossing into the Land of

the Five rivers, if I really wished to cross, and this dictum of his proved to be true

The autumn wore on, the later harvest was reaped, and I went into camp, as we called it, that is I marched about in the interior of my jurisdiction, dwelling in tents, not seeing any European, and never hearing English spoken for many weeks consecutively Besides my general work in the Registration of landed tenures, a portion of the Muttra district was specially entrusted to me In that portion I supervised the collection of the revenue, and exercised control over the Police I conducted the enquiries into criminal cases of a heinous character, and disposed of lesser magisterial cases by my own authority The population thus under my care was about a quarter of a million So within the first year of my service I felt the novel sense of power, and knew what it was to command

On the occurrence of a crime, the primary thing for me was to gallop to the spot and interrogate the witnesses, before their truthfulness should be tarnished, and before they could be instructed by anyone as to what tale they were to tell in Court The overt and violent gang-robbery—elsewhere known as Dacoity—was of very rare occurrence But bloody affrays with lethal weapons, arising from disputes about land, were only too frequent These were all the more shocking because the combatants were usually cousins, and sometimes even brethren They would, it was hoped, be

prevented in the future by the Registration of tenures and of boundaries which I was conducting The murders generally sprang from deadly jealousy on account of social wrong A breach of the marriage obligation was punishable criminally indeed, but prosecutions were rare The husband sought his satisfaction with the bullet or the dagger, and the wife often shared the fate of her paramour Still the peasant women were on the whole well-behaved as I thought, and of the women in the upper and middle classes I saw nothing There was some drinking, of course, but intemperance was unusual, and the people generally were more temperate than any I had ever known The poor were, of course, with us, but there was no Poor-law, nor any need of such, for the sick, the infirm and the indigent were supported by the generosity of the villagers

The life in tents charmed me altogether I chose umbrageous mango-groves, in order that they might spread their evergreen canopy over my canvas roof The mornings and the evenings were spent in the saddle, amidst sights, sounds and fragrance to please my senses I liked my camp equipage, and my baggage animals, large-eyed, short-horned oxen with pendent dewlaps My talk with the villagers, about their personal histories, opened out to me new vistas of human sentiment The forenoon was devoted to business wholly in the vernacular In the afternoon my canvas vestibule became crowded with applicants,

petitioners, witnesses, disputants, and lookers-on Indeed, the villagers loved to watch me, the pale-faced, beardless Anglo-Saxon, seated against the trunk of some monarch of the grove, and dispensing patriarchal justice After sundown I sat on a thick rug, spread upon the dry ground, together with my Native clerks and some other Natives of consequence, round a glowing bonfire outside my tent-door After dinner in the long evenings I kept myself warm with wraps and plaids, while reading Alison's narrative of Napoleon's achievements From this reading I drew inspiration, and contemplated administration conducted with immense energy in a gigantic sphere Then I was bathed in the light of a November moon, that harvest moon to which every Native lifts up his eyes with thankfulness to the Preserver of universal humanity, for the ingathering of the second crop of the past agricultural year, and the sowings assured for the coming season

By one set of circumstances only, during this happy winter, were my thoughts chequered Within this year the second Sikh war had broken out The British operations had begun indifferently, and had then proceeded in a manner that brought our army into a critical position I had ere this discovered that the opinion of the Natives regarding our political prospects is ever unfathomable, yet I fancied that some change was perceptible in their estimate of my power to command their obedience The change was like breath upon a

mutiny, but I felt that it would become more marked if we were to receive any further military checks So when the crowning victory of Goojerat was announced, I was glad to tell the news to the Natives around me, knowing well that they would understand how a solitary European officer was backed by a power for the present at least irresistible

The winter was hardly over when I was summoned to attend Mr Thomason at Agra He intimated to me that my work in the Registration of land tenures, in the Muttra district, had given such satisfaction that I was to be entrusted with similar work, only on a larger scale, in the Allahabad district, and to be promoted a grade in the Service This promotion, much earlier than anything ordinarily to be expected, was my first step after one year only of active work It was Eastertide, there being no Chaplain, the Civil Servants used to take turns to read the Sunday prayers when two or three were gathered together in the Court-house. My last act at Muttra was thus to read the prayers on the evening of Easter Sunday, 1849 The next day I started for Allahabad, the first scene in my drama being thus closed

Arriving, by a rapid journey in a one-horse van by the Grand Trunk Road, at Allahabad in the early spring, I was appointed to act as Joint Magistrate, which meant that I was the principal magisterial officer for the whole district, under the Magistrate and Collector.

This was a distinct step for a young officer of little over a year's service I was further to revise the Registration of land tenures in that portion of the district which lay south of the river Jamna For this portion, too, I had entire charge of the revenue and the police Thus my position had become a good one, and I wrote to my father that I was already in executive charge of half a million of people

In the Registration work, for me the cardinal affair, I was virtually subordinate to the Commissioner of the district of Allahabad and of the neighbouring districts, Mr Robert Lowther Already I had been warned by Mr Thomason that, to be successful in my work, I must win and keep the confidence of this high official He was of the Lowther stock and a scion of the well-known family of the North of England He was an able Civil Servant of the elder school, and perhaps he regarded me as a disciple of the new official faith in the era of Thomason Still he liked my zeal, which burst forth in the springtide of youth, and he accorded to me a generous support, combining with that the useful instruction which his long experience enabled him to give I cherish his memory with gratitude

How perfectly do I recollect calling to pay my respects to him in his fine mansion and umbrageous garden, little dreaming that this acquaintance would prove momentous to me I met his wife and her sister Miss Charlotte Frances Martindale. I often had

occasion to drive over to Mr Lowther's house of an evening after my long day's work to talk over official matters with him My visits at eventide became more and more frequent I began to tell the story of my life to the young lady with that volubility which comes from freshness of spirit We were married at Allahabad at the end of 1849 I had to proceed immediately on a tour in tents throughout my portion of the district So after the wedding our double-poled tent was pitched in a tamarind grove over against some Mahomedan shrines The honeymoon was spent amidst rural, though busy, scenes of Native life My marches, which had heretofore been always on horseback, were now sometimes varied by driving in a gig suited for rough roads The rustics seemed to be interested in beholding a European lady amidst their villages They would play their national games before her Among other feats, they would hew asunder with a sword-stroke the big fish caught in the streams around us My special work in the Registration of land tenures advanced apace, and from official commendations which I received it seemed that my repute with the Government was growing

As the hot weather set in, my wife and I were glad to seek the shelter of an excellent house in Allahabad She whispered in my ear that distinction could be won by the pen in the English language indoors, as well as by vernacular business in the field I began to write

articles for the "Calcutta Review," a quarterly periodical which numbered among its contributors some of the brightest men that had adorned the Civil and Military Services My earliest article was on Vernacular Schools, representing what would in the English of to-day be termed Elementary Education Mr Thomason was then introducing this education into his Provinces and I aspired to be the first officer in charge of it He however said that I was reserved for sterner things Here again, for the second time his dictum in my case proved true

Shortly afterwards, near the end of 1850, an offer came from the Panjab, through Mr John Lawrence, of employment there as a Settlement officer The offer of the previous year had not been accepted, but this offer was distinctly a better one I was to have an independent command with increased emoluments My eldest son, Richard, had been born but recently, the journey was an arduous one for my wife, but she urged me to accept at once, which I did I received my first letter from Mr John Lawrence intimating that I was to be Settlement Officer of Jullunder halfway between the rivers Satlej and Beas This was the best possible situation for me under the circumstances Mr Thomason dismissed me with his blessing in one of those farewell letters which no man knew better how to write So about New Year's Day 1851 I started, with my wife and infant son, from Allahabad for Jullunder

in a one-horse van along the Grand Trunk Road, a journey of some seven hundred miles The season of the year was superb, the unenclosed fields of wheat and barley, just springing up, formed an interminable expanse of emerald for hundreds of miles

The construction of this Grand Trunk Road, designed to stretch for fifteen hundred miles from terminus to terminus, was one of those enterprises which have been rarely seen since the days of the Roman Empire I marvelled also at the organisation connected with the Road, which Mr Thomason used proudly to call the main artery of circulation There were police posts at short intervals, caravanserais for travellers, depôts for stores and provisions, agencies for the supply of transport, and dispensaries for the sick in convenient positions Indeed much of our best thought was given to this mighty road, just as if we were working for an indefinite future, and without any prevision as to a new era being at hand, when railways would to a great degree supersede all these arrangements of ours

The air became more exhilarating, and the frosts before sunrise were sharper, when we reached Umballa near the base of the Himalayan region The Trunk Road was not yet completed beyond that point, so we had to exchange our one-horse vans for palanquins

One day the haziness of the bright atmosphere is cleared by some wintry showers I descry on the northern horizon a long white glittering wall—the

outline being too sharp for clouds I alight from the palanquin, apply my field-glass to the strange phenomenon, enquire of my palanquin bearers, and lo! it is, it is, the Himalaya Instinctively I take off my white helmet to salute the peerless mountains on this my first sight of them

Soon we crossed the Satlej by a long bridge of boats—subsequently superseded by a railway viaduct of immense length That was as the crossing of the Rubicon to me In the springtide of youth our cogitations are few and short Yet I could not but remember that I was leaving the North-Western Provinces and the School of Thomason, to enter the Panjab and the School of Lawrence, in a new field and under stirring circumstances Without seeking to divine how I might fare there, I felt no misgiving if only health and strength should be spared to me

CHAPTER V

(1851–6)—THE PANJAB

The Settlement of the Jullundei district—My tour in the villages—Assessment of the Land revenue and the Record of Rights—My first visit to Simla and meeting with Mr John Lawrence—My reception by Lord Dalhousie—Visit to Dhurmsâla in the mountains—Proceed to Lahore—The Lawrence brothers—The Settlement of districts beyond the river Ravi—Preparation of the First Panjab Report—The Panjab Civil Code—Mr Montgomery—Departure of Sir Henry Lawrence—Mr John Lawrence as Chief Commissioner—The Goojerat district—My appointment as Secretary—Second Panjab Report—My journey towards England—Meeting with Lord Canning at Barrackpore—Arrival in Worcestershire

ARRIVING at Jullundei in the middle of January 1851 I took over charge of the Settlement from my predecessor Mr Hercules Scott He was an excellent officer who, after doing much for the furtherance of the work, had been obliged by ill health to take furlough to England, leaving a considerable portion unfinished I was instructed to finish this in the first place

I was now, after just three years of active service in India, the Settlement officer of Jullundei one of the richest districts in the Panjab At this juncture the official position was the very best I could have hoped for, even when my ambition was disposed to soar A Settlement was the most arduous task with which a

Civil Servant could be entrusted The crux or crisis o a Settlement was the assessment of the Land revenue For Jullunder this had not yet been brought about Masses of data had indeed been collected by my pre decessor But I was now to act immediately with such preparation as I could acquire I had, however, three months before me of the fairest season for working and that, too, within a compact area Rarely, in a long career, has my mettle been more tested, and my power more strained, than in the early months of 1851

The surveys, down to the last field, had been made the statistics had been collated to the last item But the real rub was in the application of all this to a financial result, important to the State at the outset of British rule, and to the people quite vital My method was then, as it has ever been, to ride all over the country in order to see and hear for myself The peasant-proprietors were to tell me all they knew standing on their own ground, and in the presence of their fellows I found no difficulty with the Panjab language as it was akin to the Hindustani The peasantry were partly Sikh and partly Moslem The long-bearded Sikhs especially were of a tall stalwart race There was a true saying in respect to many a village, that it could furnish men enough for a grenadier company in the army all belonging to the same cousinhood I was informed that the people spoke of me in their terse phrase which may be translated

thus — he will hear everybody, but will act for himself

So my tents were pitched and struck daily with ceaseless locomotion The rising sun saw me in the saddle and I did not dismount till noon Then came a midday meal and two or three hours with the statistics —another ride till nightfall—after dinner, some further study of my papers—and early rest before early rising —midnight oil being unknown In my rides amidst the fields, with the spring crops growing, I was accompanied by representative villagers, themselves mounted, to show me the localities So before the spring was over I had mastered the previously collected data, and made my own calculations Thus the land revenue was assessed for each Village Community in each parish-area in the lump For each considerable group of such areas I used to collect the representatives, seated on rugs or carpets, in my double-poled tent I myself announced the assessment on each area in the annual sum of rupees for the thirty years following Never shall I forget the curiosity and anxiety depicted on their ordinarily impassive faces, as I read out sum after sum for each village—the breathless silence during the announcement—the hum of excited conversation when the reading was over

The distribution of the burden among the individual proprietors in each Village Community was then left to be settled by themselves according to their local customs

This involved the Registration of land tenures, some times termed the Record of Rights In this, too, w included the determination of disputes and causes various sorts relating to the ownership and occupatic of land, all which I and my Assistants had the judici power of deciding, without any appeal to the Civ Courts

Having set this Record well in hand, I obtained month's leave to visit Simla, whither my wife ha preceded me I had won my spurs sufficiently in th Panjab to entitle me to do this I wished to make th acquaintance of Mr John Lawrence, and if possible t be presented to the Governor-General Lord Dalhousi who was then in the zenith of fame I was thus to l *en évidence* before my masters The process wa described by my friends as "dancing before Herod and so it veritably proved to be Travelling in a sulti summer's night by palanquin to the foot of the Hima laya, I hardly paused to marvel at the mountain marvellous as they were to one who, like me, had nc had a near view of anything higher than Snowdon c Helvellyn I ascended to Kussowlee, six thousand fee above sea-level, and then pressed on by moonlight ove hill-tops, till I suddenly entered the rhododendron groves and the pine-woods of Simla The cool fragranc of the night air, amidst perennial vegetation, soothe my travel-worn nerves

The next morning was memorable, for then I ha

my first interview with Mr John Lawrence He was less stern and grave, more cheerful and affable, than I had expected Indeed at that time frankness of speech and alacrity of spirit were his external characteristics He plunged into enquiries about my work, having himself been the first Commissioner of the Jullunder district, together with other districts For some short time I saw him almost daily, and each day his kindness grew I became conscious that he had inwardly resolved to make me his Secretary, if only opportunity offered, which might, however not be the case But to win this position in his esteem was the cardinal matter for me

Then Lord Dalhousie was so gracious as to ask him to bring me to dinner quietly His Lordship looked young, fresh and blooming, though self-possessed in the highest degree He received us in a pretty house of Swiss architecture, and I had the honour of sitting next to him who was already hailed by public opinion as "the great Pro-consul" He naturally directed his conversation to Mr John Lawrence who sat on the other side of him I noted his mastery of Panjab affairs, and his calm authoritative air in expressing his views. The surroundings, by contrast, impressed me beyond measure After my recent tent-life in glare and flying dust, in heat that abated not even at night, in solitude as regards European society—this sudden entrance into comfort and elegance, with Staff Officers

in uniform and a band softly discoursing music—seemed to me like the gate of paradise! I had never yet sat at such a memorable dinner

During my brief sojourn at Simla my wife would take me for rides round the place, with which she was already acquainted But just then I had no eyes even for the background of snowy peaks I had forgotten my landscape painting for a while, being absorbed in reflections upon my career and its responsibilities I left her there for the benefit of the climate till the autumn, and returned to Jullunder by the way I came I there sought the shelter of my house, as tents would be no longer endurable Soon the rainy season came to refresh us, and in the early morn, asleep in my balcony, I would dream of the Himalaya looming before me, only to find on awaking that the vision was that of cloud-masses charged with rain and rising over the flat horizon

The preparation of my Settlement Record was now going on apace, and with it my difficulties began The peasantry had not been accustomed to minute enquiries into their affairs under any system preceding British rule They were not willing to help us, as they doubted whether our intentions were quite disinterested Though their memories were long and their traditions had been cherished, they were not careful to give us accurate information on countless particulars In vain I assured them that all we desired was the futur

security of their rights, tenures and properties—that their prosperity was ours—that our revenue would rise or fall according as they flourished or suffered—that our interest and theirs must in the end be identical When the papers had been drawn up, with great labour and expense, various errors would be discovered Then some correction or rewriting would be needed In the end we got the Record nominally complete, in framework elaborate, but in details sometimes erroneous At all events it formed a capital basis for a revised Record in the future But that it could not be made wholly trustworthy in this initial stage, was a matter of disappointment to me

I was subordinate to the Commissioner Mr (afterwards Sir Donald) Macleod, who was sojourning at Dhurmsâla in the Himalaya beyond Kôt Kangra It was well for me to visit him there and talk over our affairs, so I gladly undertook the journey I passed the citadel of Kôt Kangra at sundown, admiring the outline of that Sikh stronghold as it stood out against the after-glow of eventide I was now belated, having intended to reach Dhurmsâla that evening in good time Instead of that, I saw the lower range of the Himalaya in front of me, and knew that Dhurmsâla was somewhere up aloft, distant a good march A full moon was rising, however, and I had a mounted guide who would keep me on the right bridle path So, changing horses, I rode on at once After some

considerable ascent I came upon a table-land, and an upper valley, traversed or permeated by rivulets, streamlets, channels, water-courses innumerable, running with perceptible currents, and gleaming in all directions like silver streaks under the moon With this network of irrigation there were rich rice-crops springing up For a background to the picture of Alpine prosperity the mountain-sides rose up forest-clad The ear as well as the eye was delighted, for as I paused to listen, the tiny torrents were rattling over stones, or brawling among petty obstacles in their courses Their noise was as that of countless voices mingled in one great babblement Advancing from this moonlit scene with the babel of sounds, I reached before midnight the hospital threshold of my cousin Mr George Barnes

Returning after a few days to Jullunder, I completed my Settlement work by the end of the year, reported its financial results and presented an elaborate account of the land tenures At that time my old master, Mr Thomason the Lieutenant-Governor, with his family, passed through Jullunder on the way from the North-Western Provinces to visit Lahore I had the advantage of showing him my draft report on the land tenures By his sympathetic advice I enlarged my report, and entered into the history of Sikh rule as affecting the rural communities I knew not that this was the last time I should ever see his beloved face

Before leaving Jullunder I made the acquaintance

of Major (afterwards Sir Herbert) Edwardes, a man of a very attractive individuality His early service had been on the Afghan border beyond the Indus From him I derived my first ideas of that important frontier with which in after years I was destined to become familiar

I was then entrusted with the Settlement of the districts lying beyond Lahore, and between the rivers Ravi and Chenab So I passed on to my new sphere about New Year's Day 1852 My route lay through Amritsar, the religious centre of the Sikhs, with its gilt temple islanded in a great tank I took my first lesson in Sikh doctrines, hearing about the religious function of baptism by genuflexion at the priest's feet, and the secular ceremony of baptism by holding up the sword I met the Sikh devotees, well known as martial monks, with their dark pointed beards falling to the waist, and their turbans and waistbands of indigo and black, quite bristling with burnished knives and daggers At Lahore I noticed the city walls still intact, the two mosques, one bearing the name of the Emperor, the other of the Vizier, the tomb of Ranjit Sing, the Lion ruler of the Panjab, and hard by across the Ravi the mausoleum erected after the death of the Emperor Jehangir by his widow, the masterful and martial Empress who had once been the Light of the Harem

Not to these things, however romantic, were my regards turned For I had to meet the Panjab Board

of Administration, at Lahore their headquarters This Board, which was formed by Lord Dalhousie in 1849 immediately after the annexation of the Panjab, consisted in 1852 of the brothers, Sir Henry and Mr John Lawrence, and Mr (afterwards Sir Robert) Montgomery, Sir Henry being the President I was now to become conversant with the sentiments of my masters, and to be questioned by them as to what I had done or could do Instead of dreading, I counted such examination as the means of gaining a place in their estimation Thus I was, for the second time, "dancing before Herod" I was already acquainted with Mr John Lawrence and Mr Montgomery With Sir Henry Lawrence I made my acquaintance for the first time in his Residency, a domed Moslem shrine adapted to European habitation He seemed to be more staid and reserved than I had expected But underneath his gravity there existed a flashing spirit and a burning zeal His thoughtful intelligence and deep culture made him a more formidable interrogator than any I had yet met Respecting the politics of the Panjab, there was evidently some difference in policy and in sentiment between the two brothers But Mr John Lawrence loyally told me that such difference should be veiled from public view I learned that Lord Dalhousie had required from the Board an account of their grand stewardship since 1849 The Board had a magnificent story to tell, only there was a difficulty in telling it

properly, because they had nobody at hand who could draft a Report likely to be acceptable to men with powerful and independent minds, but with divergent opinions

I then crossed the Ravi and took up the Settlement Once more I began to ride about an extensive country with all my might, or rather the might of my horses I was amazed at the variety of physical conditions within my new jurisdiction First I entered a wild country called the "Bar" This was not exactly a jungle, for the soil was friable and there was no undergrowth It was an interminable forest of low trees, crossed with sandy bridle-roads and dotted very sparsely with pastoral hamlets Then I entered the irrigated cultivation near the base of the Himalaya The irrigation was from wells excavated deep below the surface The water was drawn up by huge wheels, to which numerous earthen pitchers were attached These wheels, by their revolutions, caught the liquid from below and emptied it into the channels all round The motive power was from bullocks dragging an endless course round and round both day and night The gyrations of the wheels made a harsh creaking sound, which could however be softened by distance The resonance from numberless wheels, at varying distances, made a chorus like that of insects humming and buzzing In my tents I was lulled to sleep by this partially harmonised volume of sound, and I was

greeted by it again on the first moment of waking at dawn

The hot season advanced, and I wished to do as much as possible out of doors before the rains should set in About the beginning of June, the heat under canvas was such that I remember touching the pole of my tent and withdrawing my hand hastily as if it had been in contact with hot iron One morning, while thus in camp, I received a despatch from Mr John Lawrence, intimating that the Board had decided to entrust me with the drafting of their Report, and directing me to return at once to Lahore for that purpose That day I sent out relays of horses on the stages, as Lahore was eighty miles off In the cool of the next evening I started, and rode till midnight, once more under a favouring moon I rested in a village and the next morning reached Lahore

That was the most memorable night's ride in my life, for it was big with my fate I was to sink or swim according to my success, or otherwise, in this the most distinguished task that had as yet been committed to me Heretofore my rapid progress and promotion had been in the regular and ordinary line—in a prominent branch no doubt, but still in line service Indeed I had been, from the first, anxious to serve in the line, to bear my part in the ranks however hard, to put my hand to the plough and my shoulder to the wheel But this new task would take me quite out of the line

and place me on a different platform After only four years and a half since my entry on active work, I was to be in the inner confidence of the Board which virtually governed the country, and was to come under the eye of the Governor-General This would lead to my being appointed Secretary to the Panjab Administration, if a vacancy could be found for me If that could not be, still my having done such a work as this Report would give me a status of which nothing could deprive me, and which must in some way or other help me to rise higher It was with these unexpressed thoughts in my mind that I presented myself to my masters, the great triumvirate at Lahore the capital

I found that the Board, for extraordinary affairs, deliberated in common, but had for ordinary affairs a division of labour among its Members Accordingly I had for the preparation of the Report to take instructions from Sir Henry Lawrence regarding the military frontier, the Native States, the public works—from Mr John Lawrence regarding the Revenue and the Finance in all their branches—from Mr Montgomery regarding the courts of Justice, the police and prisons I drafted my chapters according to these general directions, submitting the draft of each chapter to the Member in charge, which, after his emendations, was circulated among the other Members There was one exception, namely this, that Mr John Lawrence himself drafted the passages which related to the land

revenue For the general description of the Panjab, I made the draft from my own knowledge, and circulated that to all the Members In respect to the Public Works, that is, the canals of irrigation, the trunk roads, and the civil buildings, I was in communication with Colonel Robert Napier, afterwards Lord Napier of Magdâla I then formed with him a friendship which lasted through life At this time also I met Lieutenant (afterwards Sir Alexander) Taylor, who was carrying on the Grand Trunk Road from the Eastern confines of the Panjab to the Indus at Attock This special and additional work of mine was kept apart from the Secretariat of the Board, as another officer was already the Secretary It occupied me for fully two months

The Report, when submitted to Lord Dalhousie, received the highest commendation from him, which was by itself the guerdon of success It was soon published, and then excited much public comment I neither received nor expected any reward whatever at the time, not even any official acknowledgment of my labour—as my whole energy was at the disposal of the Board But I remained on the best possible terms with the Members of the Board, and I felt my position to be such that something good must sooner or later befall me

In the autumn I returned to my Settlement work in the interior, and pressed it on till the end of the year At Christmas I had a brief sojourn at Lahore

In those few days I was enthusiastic enough to stay up all night in order to read "Uncle Tom's Cabin" at a single sitting Early in the new year, 1853, my second son, Henry, was born, and then I returned to my tents and proceeded with the Settlement Soon a fresh summons came from Lahore and this time I was to take Mr Montgomery's instructions regarding the preparation of a Civil Code for the Panjab This was an additional distinction for me, and it consolidated the position I had already acquired with the Board In this draft Code I was directed to embody all the main principles of Hindu and Mahomedan law, and rules of procedure suitable for the Panjab Every assistance was placed at my disposal, and after intense study, I succeeded in getting the draft into shape to the satisfaction of my employers

But now the days of the historic Board were numbered I was still at Lahore when news came, like a bolt from the sky, that Sir Henry Lawrence had accepted a high appointment in another part of India, that Mr John Lawrence was to be Chief Commissioner as head of a new Administration for the Panjab, and that Mr Montgomery was to be virtually Chief Justice under the name of Judicial Commissioner I drove over at once to Sir Henry's house, the Residency, to verify the intelligence I found consternation reigning there among his immediate friends respecting this unlooked for change Many careers were suddenly checked

and many hopes blasted I felt that a man of genius was departing from us But I rejoiced that my two patrons, Mr John Lawrence and Mr Montgomery, were remaining

I then reverted to my Settlement in the interior with pardonable pride after my achievements at Lahore Soon the utmost grief was excited by the news of the sudden and untimely death of Mr Thomason, the Lieutenant-Governor, my earliest patron Early in the autumn, from exposure to malaria in the execution of my duty, I caught a fever which flew to my over-wrought brain Soon recovering, I joined my wife at Murree, between the Jhelum and the Indus, which had now become the health-resort of the Western Panjab The country round there was under my old friend Mr Edward Thornton At this time I saw him sorely tried by fanatical insurgents from the wild frontier near us We were all mounting guard and standing to arms during the night The next day Mr Thornton, at the head of his police, received a shot in the neck from a bullet, but escaped without any grave injury He suppressed the rising storm, but the episode reminded me, though indeed I hardly needed such reminding, of the risks that ever beset our power in the East Here we were, amidst the most diligent work of peace, and yet amidst the alarms of armed turbulence I heeded but slightly the noble scenery around me, being anxious to return to my Settlement I only

noted the snowy peaks, on the other side of which lay the Vale of Cashmere

Continuing my Settlement during the winter months, I was in my tents early in 1854 when my thoughts were diverted afresh by a suggestion from the North-Western Provinces For a letter came from my old friend, Mr William Muir, with an offer from the new Lieutenant-Governor Mr Colvin, of the Registership, virtually the Secretaryship, to the Sudder or chief Court of those Provinces This was for me a brilliant offer, and I obtained Mr John Lawrence's kind permission to accept it I attributed it partly to the efforts made by me in framing the Civil Code under Mr Montgomery But Lord Dalhousie forbade my leaving the Panjab, and directed that some further provision should be made for me there His Lordship was so good as to say that the public service in the Panjab would suffer by my departure Mr John Lawrence kindly declared himself to be only too willing to make some fresh arrangement for me So I was promoted a grade in the Service, and placed at the head of the Goojerat district between the rivers Chenab and Jhelum, in full magisterial and fiscal charge, together with the Settlement of that district—giving up my Settlement work, now far advanced, between the Ravi and the Chenab This union of the two charges, that of the district and that of the Settlement, in me was a thing in those days unprecedented, and I was to regard

it as an honour Thus I was still in the ordinary line, and matters had not turned out according to my just expectations But it was not in my nature to be discontented, and I loved an active command

So I crossed the mighty Chenab at low water in the early spring by a bridge of boats and entered on my pastures new My station at Goojerat was close to the field of Lord Gough's crowning victory over the Sikhs Before the hot weather set in, I rode round, according to my custom, and visited the low range of hills overlooking the Jhelum—the scene in the elder time of the fight between Alexander the Great and Porus, and recently of the battle near Chillianwala Soon I became quite absorbed in my executive work, and for the moment had no thought beyond it

But one Saturday morning in the rainy season, once more and for the third time, a fateful summons came from Lahore This was a letter from Mr John Lawrence, informing me that the Secretary—Mr Melvill—had died the night previously, and directing me to proceed at once and take his place at Lahore The next day I read the Sunday prayers for the last time to some half dozen persons collected in my Courthouse Very early on Monday morning I rode down to the river bank, where a boat with my luggage was ready to take me across But the Chenab was no longer a definite stream, crossed by a bridge of boats, as when I had last seen it Now it was in full flood,

several miles broad, with whirling currents The gallant boatmen plied their task from morn to eve in one of the longest days of the year The glare, and the refracted sunlight from the water, reddened and blistered my face When I again stood on *terra firma* I bade farewell for ever to district work, and felt that I had served my apprenticeship for higher employ

On my joyful meeting with Mr John Lawrence at Lahore, he received me in a characteristic way He said that he would always be glad of my opinion, and of my pen to defend or expound his policy But the policy must be his alone, and not mine at all My day, he kindly assured me, would come thereafter, every creature must have its day, and the present day was his! In truth we suited each other to perfection, and there was a thorough understanding between us With him I was the square man in the square place I had the practical knowledge on the one hand, and the literary training on the other, which he required A son could not have served a father more willingly than I did him I had come to his service in the nick of time Soon after my arrival he had an attack in the head, which laid the foundation of further mischief I stood by his bedside, as he lay excruciated with headache He whispered to me that he felt as if a Raksha (demon of Hindu mythology) was prodding his brain with a red-hot trident Cold-water douches relieved him, but for days he lay prostrated When he grew

better, I told him, at his bedside, by way of reassurance, that all the business was in a forward state Even in sickness, however, he was mindful of his own responsibility He at once expressed a hope that I was not issuing any order of importance which had not received his authority He journeyed to Murree, and, in the mountain climate, soon recovered up to a certain point

My first important business was to prepare the Second Panjab Report, and this time I had only one master to serve But Mr Lawrence himself wrote that portion which related to the Land revenue Then for some months our work went on without let, hitch or friction, with that smoothness which comes from absolute accord between the Chief and his henchman In order that I might be posted up in his views, he would almost daily write to me a letter on his general policy Those were days of really strong administration My Chief would be unstinting in praise of those who did well, and they were legion But he would be unsparing in blame of those who deserved it, and if I did not write the draft despatch strongly enough, he would make me rewrite it with greater strength I was to see and meet everyone who had business with the Administration I was careful to suppress my own personality, always keeping to the front the authority of my Chief It was hard for me, as the right hand man of such a Chief, to prevent jealousy among the

outside would here and there Still I strove to be conciliatory towards them all, trusting to him to vindicate me if I should be attacked for writing that which he had bidden me to write The only difficulty I can remember was in this wise When we were together, he was fond of calling me to his study after breakfast and instructing me fully as to several despatches on big subjects that were to be drafted I was only too glad to prepare such despatches, but perhaps I could not do so that day, or even the next day, having a mass of current and urgent affairs to dispose of On the following morning perhaps he, having in the meanwhile been thinking of other matters, would ask me whether these despatches were ready The stress increased when we were on the winter's march in tents, and when I had to rise long before dawn and write by candlelight, well wrapped up in the frosty air—so as to have some work off my hands before he and I mounted our horses at sunrise Looking back across the gulf of time, I desire to say my very best of him, for no man could have been kinder to me than he was

When the electric telegraph was opened between Calcutta and the Panjab, my duty was to receive the first message that came to Lahore I watched the vibrations of the needle as each word was being spelt out by the telegraphist It was intelligence from the Crimea that was being telegraphed. In breathless suspense I saw the needle tell us word by word the

summary of the battle of the Alma This really was for me a wondrous experience

Later on I was with Mr Lawrence on an elephant witnessing the illumination of Lahore in honour of the taking of Sebastopol We noticed the faces of the crowd surrounding us, and he told me that he read in them the expression of genuine delight

Once too I went with him and his youngest brother Richard — afterwards General — to visit the Sovereign of the Jammu State, Golab Sing who had played a well-known part after the first Sikh war, and whose dominion had been enlarged on the recommendation of Sir Henry Lawrence Golab Sing had all the mellifluous speech and the refined manner of a high-born Rajput I heard him say, looking at Richard—"I see in your countenance the mirror and image of your brother Henry and my heart is full to overflowing"

Early in 1855, in the heyday of my success, a calamity overtook me After the birth of my daughter, Edith, my wife died The suddenness of the shock intensified the grief Unable to bear the house of death that night, I had a tent pitched for me in the garden, hoping for sleep but I passed a sleepless night My Native valet must have sat by me through the hours of vigil, for I overhead him say to the other servants in the morning that his master had not slept at all After the funeral I betook myself to Mr Lawrence's house—the Residency where Sir Henry had lived—and shut

myself up for a few days in meditation The respite was, however, short for I was roused to attend to public affairs that would brook no delay I arranged for the journey of my three motherless children to England, and then joined Mr Lawrence at Murree in the summer Of an evening, after the day's work had been done, I used to read out to him the novels of Walter Scott The Himalayan scenery brings solace to the sorrow-stricken, and in that summer I resumed practice with my pencil and brush, my landscape art having somewhat fallen into desuetude while I had been mastering my arduous profession

Throughout 1855 Mr Lawrence's Administration prospered exceedingly Under his direction I became versed in the rough transactions with the wild tribes on the Trans-Indus frontier, the relations with the Native States greater and lesser, the canals for irrigation, the trunk roads, the sanitary improvements, the schemes for navigating the Five Rivers, the introduction of vernacular education, the prison discipline—in short, everything that pertained to a Province that was to be in the van and forefront of progress

At that time I had my first lesson in epidemic disease I was honorary member of the mess of the 81st Regiment, at Meean Meer near Lahore, commanded by Colonel (now General) Rennie Suddenly cholera—an enemy who we fondly hoped would never cross the Satlej—appeared among the European soldiers with

deadly effect Thence it spread to the Civil Station and the city of Lahore Though quite well myself, I experienced the sensation of rising each day and wondering whether it would be the last—of despatching large affairs and reflecting whether they would be the final ones The mental effect was severe at first, but I quickly became accustomed to a discipline most wholesome It was the same with those around me, for the Anglo-Indian community bore this crucial trial to the nerves with exemplary calmness and presence of mind

Early in 1856 Mr Lawrence visited Lord Dalhousie in Calcutta before His Lordship's departure for England, and returned to Lahore as Sir John Soon afterwards Lord Dalhousie sent a request that I should prepare a Report for the use of the Government of India regarding our operations, military and political, on the Trans-Indus frontier, our armed interposition, our measures of pacification I forthwith undertook the task, the performance of which was indeed an honour, and Lord Dalhousie sent a hearty acknowledgment officially Before making over charge to his successor Lord Canning, he wrote me a farewell note which I have ever treasured

During this year I received such accounts of my father's health—which had been failing since 1852—as induced me to take six months' leave to England in order to see him Before my departure I was honoured

by an official letter from Sir John Lawrence couched in terms of the strongest commendation An official letter from a Chief to his Secretary was unusual, but he desired to place on record his sentiments regarding me In the autumn I started from Lahore in good health for Calcutta, but on my way I caught a fever, probably from travelling in the night air at that malarious season This relentless foe pursued me for all the rest of my journey, delaying me grievously during the route

I managed however to visit Delhi in order to contemplate that imperial city in its wealth and beauty little dreaming of the awful tragedy that was to be acted there within a twelvemonth I delighted in the many-coloured bazaars—the throngs in the streets—the gay occupants of the balconies—the mixed sounds of a busy and cheerful multitude—the palatial institutions — the Jama mosque, indeed the queen-mosque of Asia—the Mogul palace overlooking the Jamna water

From Delhi the horse transit was rapid as before to Benares by the Grand Trunk Road I was thankful to find that beyond Benares the crawling pace of the palanquins was a sorrow of the past, and that the Trunk Road was now continued to Raniganj, distant a hundred miles and more from Calcutta At Raniganj I saw, for the first time in India, a railway train, after the lapse of years it seems strange to recall the curiosity

with which I regarded its movements But I felt that since my departure from Calcutta just nine years before a new era had been ushered into India by the iron horse Before entering the capital, I halted at Serampore famous from its association with the Baptist Mission and the career of Marshman There I was hospitably entertained by Mr Meredith Townsend the Editor of "The Friend of India," a weekly paper then the most influential organ of public opinion in India He had on divers occasions afforded consistent support to the Panjab Administration I derived mental refreshment from his conversation, marked as it was by thoughtful originality and vigorous expression

After arriving at Calcutta I was invited to Barrackpore by Lord Canning I was presented to Lady Canning, the most gifted Englishwoman that had ever landed in India I could not then foresee what a dominant influence would be exercised on my future career by the acquaintance with His Lordship which was thus beginning I was struck at first sight by the Socratic method of enquiry which he adopted in conversing with me, and then by his hesitancy in forming conclusions I did not imagine that he was about to pass through one of the most fiery furnaces into which a statesman had ever been cast At that time there was not the faintest sound of warning, not the slightest breath of suspicion, regarding the storm that was ere long to burst over India I then

sailed for England, and it was not till near the close of 1856 that, after beholding weather effects of the grandest kind in the strait of Bonifacio between Corsica and Sardinia—I landed at Marseilles The New Year's Day of 1857 was being merrily celebrated in Paris, when the train carried me on towards my ancestral home in Worcestershire

CHAPTER VI

(1857–9)—TIME AFTER THE MUTINIES

Tour in Italy—News of the Mutinies in India—Return to London—Return to Calcutta—Meet Lord Canning at Allahabad—Rejoin Sir John Lawrence at Delhi—The Ex-King of Delhi—Revert to Lahore—Apprehensions regarding temper of Panjabi troops—March to Peshawur—Sir John Lawrence reads out Queen's proclamation on the Crown assuming direct government of India—He is appointed the first Lieutenant-Governor of the Panjab—His departure for England—He is succeeded by Sir Robert Montgomery—I am appointed Commissioner of the Lahore Division—The European forces of the late East India Company—Moslem fanaticism at Lahore—My first visit to Cashmere—Sikh treason at Lahore—My relations with the Natives—James Wilson the Economist visits Lahore—My appointment on the financial staff of the Government of India—Departure from the Panjab for Calcutta

MY return home in January 1857, after an absence of nine eventful years, did not afford me the happiness which might ordinarily be expected For my father had become much changed from illness, the conversational power, the curiosity for knowledge, were abated I had come back with a new world in my head, but the person to whom, above all others, I wished to tell my story was no longer able to hear it. My own health, too, was for a time so much shaken that I had to change my six months' leave to a year under medical authority My two sons were being educated under the ancestral roof

In the spring I undertook, for the first time in my life, a Continental tour, taking two unmarried sisters with me The Alpine range had not then been tunnelled, so we crossed Mont Cenis by diligence in a snow-storm on our way to Florence to meet a married sister and her husband, Captain and Mrs Tennant The meeting, which was to have been joyous, was turned to sorrow, as we found Mrs Tennant dying from fever After an interval, we resumed our tour for the summer But I heard disquieting reports of the Mutinies occurring among the Native sepoys in India, followed by the news of the capture of Delhi by the rebels and the proclamation of a new Mogul Empire Returning immediately to London, by the St Gothard Pass (again in a snow-storm), I reported myself at the India Office for orders as to whether all officers on leave were to rejoin their posts in India I was directed to await further instructions The latest news showed that the communication between Calcutta and the Panjab was entirely cut off by the rebellion So it would be at present impossible for me to rejoin my post I then made acquaintance with John Stuart Mill, the author and philosopher, who was an honoured Secretary at the East India Company's headquarters, and was conducting their correspondence with Her Majesty's Government I also had some important conversations with Sir John Kaye the author, who afterwards wrote

the first part of the History of the Mutinies I dined with Mr John Marshman in Kensington Palace Gardens, and mentioned all I had recently seen at Serampore, he had been and still was, engaged in his historical works I had some noteworthy conversation with Mr (afterwards Sir William) Andrew the pioneer of railway enterprise in the Indus Valley To aggravate my doubts as to what I ought to do, the fever returned, so I was medically forbidden to undertake the voyage to India during the monsoon season All this was to me the most utter disappointment I could have met with I grieved at the thought, how I might have helped Sir John Lawrence at such a time, and how I was missing priceless opportunities by this enforced absence Meanwhile the crisis of the Mutinies was sharp and short The extremity was surmounted by the recapture of Delhi The reinforcements of European troops, arriving fast, placed the Indian Empire beyond the reach of fatal danger

I paid my respects to Lord Dalhousie, then sojourning at Malvern near my home, and His Lordship received me with all the old kindness I had not seen him since he entertained me at Simla just six years before The interval was not long, but within it he had become—*heu quantum mutatus ab illo Hectore* I grieved to see how the once fresh, dominant aspect had been effaced by noble care, gigantic labour, and cankering disease The voice alone reminded me of

his former self Our conversation fell upon the Mutinies, and he spoke freely regarding the events But when I ventured to touch on the possible causes, he lapsed into reticence and reserve Taking my leave, I was conscious that it was a last farewell, for evidently his end could not be far off

I renewed my friendship with Sir Charles Trevelyan, and was by him introduced to his wife, the sister of Macaulay By him too I was taken to dine quietly with the great historian, and that was, indeed a memorable evening Macaulay gave me in clear ringing tones, and with the most brilliant fluency, a spoken essay on the current events of the Mutinies Then I, having recently been touring in Italy, ventured to ask his opinion on several characters in the Italian middle ages I was amazed at the readiness of his knowledge, but he warned me that he was speaking offhand, without having refreshed his memory with the authorities

Though not yet restored to full health, I started on my return to India reckoning that, by the time I arrived there, communication between Calcutta and the Panjab would be reopened enough for me to rejoin Sir John Lawrence somehow A further stroke of ill-luck befell me, inasmuch as I was detained a fortnight at Cairo by the breakdown of the steamship that was to carry us from Suez onwards There was nothing for it but to utilise the interval I had

advanced in my landscape painting by study and lessons during my recent stay in England So I sketched the Nile valley from the Cairo citadel, and camped out in the desert in order to depict the several groups of Pyramids The fateful year of 1857 was drawing towards its close when I reached India

At Calcutta I found that Lord Canning had gone up country I was demi-officially informed that the Government of India contemplated employing me under themselves direct Accordingly I journeyed to Benares, not as I had travelled thither ten years previously in a palanquin with snail-like pace, but for the first part by railway and then by horse-vans Thence I was driven quickly to Allahabad the new headquarters of the North-Western Provinces

At Allahabad I waited on Lord Canning in order to learn whether he had any special orders to give me He apparently had contemplated employing me under himself But he had first referred to Sir John Lawrence who had replied by telegraph that my services were needed in the Panjab His Lordship showed me the telegram, and that decided my course It would have been promotion for me to come directly under the Governor-General in Council Still I was glad to return to the side of my old Chief who, since we parted, had won deathless fame I dined and spent the evening with Lord Canning in his tents He was like the ship-captain who had just weathered a

terrific cyclone Evidently he had grown much in stature as a ruler since we had last met some fifteen months before His health, so far from suffering, had apparently been braced

The next morning I travelled to Cawnpore, not as before by horse-van, but by railway, and alighted in the camp of the Commander-in-Chief Sir Colin Campbell — afterwards Lord Clyde He was then organising his forces for the final advance against Lucknow I dined and spent the evening with him in his tents, and he gave me his views on various points of war and policy which I was to transmit to Sir John Lawrence I had just time to see the barrack where the Europeans had held out against the mutineers, the river bank whence the rebels had fired into the boats laden with defenceless fugitives women and children, the Well into which the bodies had been flung after the massacre—then bricked up, but now surmounted by a marble angel as a monument

The following day I started for Delhi, having as yet noticed but little trace of the convulsion during the *annus mirabilis* just over But now I was to travel along the Grand Trunk Road by military transit under the Quarter-Master-General of the Army. This transit was for military officers only, but an exception was made in my favour The safety of the passage could not be assured, and the passenger would go armed Listening attentively I could catch the sound

of cannonading across the Ganges The great road well remembered by me, as thronged with commercial traffic to and fro, was now deserted The caravanserais had no wayfarers, and nothing was to be seen save military posts at intervals But the green crops which I had admired when passing up, just six years previously, were now again springing up in the fields as before Happily the villages had not been devastated by fire and sword Even the Settlement Records, forming the best monument of British rule, had been preserved, for although the originals had been destroyed at the Civil Stations by the rebels or mutineers, the copies had been kept in the villages by the hereditary Village Accountants I pushed on through the night, without sleep, as prudence demanded that I should keep my vigils The next day I was thankful to reach the Jamna bank and to cross the river by a bridge of boats—now superseded by a railway viaduct—with the Mogul Palace and the walls of Delhi right in front of me The territory and city of Delhi had previously belonged to the North-Western Provinces, but, since the recapture of the city, had been transferred to the Panjab Administration

Thus I found Sir John Lawrence on horseback inspecting his new charge He gave me the hospitality of his camp which was pitched just outside the Cashmere gate — the recent scene of British

heroism I then resumed charge of the Secretaryship Sir John seemed better in health and strength than when I had left him in time of peace The flush, the glow, the excitement of success were upon him The consciousness of immense achievements, the triumph almost wrested from destiny, had braced him up In the inner recess of his tent he spoke to me devoutly of the providential deliverance from the very jaws of destruction He told me that everything had been staked by him for the recapture of Delhi, that he had poured out his last drop, and gleaned his last blade, for this object

Passing under the Cashmere gate freshly riddled with cannon-shots, I entered the Imperial city Never before or since have I witnessed such a change in any locality as that which had here supervened during the year and a half which had elapsed since my last visit Gone were the many-coloured bazaars—vanished were the throngs in the streets and the gay occupants of the balconies—silent was the hum of a busy and cheerful multitude—extinguished was the light that springs from a mass of humanity in happy movement A melancholy desolation brooded over the broad streets and avenues A few inhabitants peered at us through the half-closed doors The public buildings — once crowded with students, suitors, agents, officials, witnesses, but now with windows darkened—were as houses of mourning The Jama Mosque one of the world's wonders, having

been desecrated for Moslem functions, was now a temporary barrack for Sikh troops and no fact could be more eloquent than this The Palace of the Moguls was now a British stronghold

In Sir John Lawrence's camp at this time I had the extreme advantage of the companionship of General (afterwards Sir Neville) Chamberlain, who entertained me with animated talk on the recent events before Delhi—*quorum pars magna fui* Without at all undertaking to reproduce his valuable opinions, I may recall some of the impressions I received The fortifications of Delhi, having been repaired, or partially rebuilt, by ourselves, proved too hard for us to recapture with the force and the means which we had at first The mutineers inside the city not only defended the walls and bastions well against such attacks as we were able to make, but also harried us with frequent sallies The decisive time was when the siege-train came up from the Panjab, wherewith to breach these fortifications in preparation for a final assault Naturally the mutineers made an effort to stop the arrival of the siege-train This effort of theirs was checked by General John Nicholson wading with his men through a flooded swamp — a signal feat of arms I was shown the spot, in a narrow street within Delhi, where Nicholson fell mortally wounded I heard accounts of his dying words—his firm belief in futurity—his humble hope of mercy

and happiness hereafter I found that Sir John Lawrence regarded him as a real hero—fit for a niche in the British Walhalla I was also told of the nerve and steadiness with which Lieutenant (afterwards Sir Alexander) Taylor placed his batteries in front of the Cashmere gate before the final assault upon Delhi I understood that, in the evening before that assault, Nicholson came from his rounds home to his tent and said—I have now made all my dispositions—I shall get my bath and my dinner—and if I outlive to-morrow morning, I shall let the world know who helped to take Delhi I believed that these words had reference to Alexander Taylor

Among my first duties was the examination of vernacular papers, captured after the recent operations and supposed to be treasonable I found reports, written by Mahomedan fanatics to their co-religionists, describing the downfall of the British power It was the suddenness of the catastrophe that impressed them, and this impression was set forth in Oriental imagery far more graphic than that which would be employed in any European language The spirit of fanaticism pervading these letters was as a fiery breath I had before me the papers discovered in the cabinet of the ex-King of Delhi and in the office of his minister, after their hasty flight from the palace Many documents bore his signature or his annotations, and he had quite acted his part when placed at the head of a revolution

Then I had to visit the ex-King himself, the last of the Moguls, now a prisoner in the Palace He was seated on a rug in a marble hall, nervous, almost trembling, and counting beads Watching his chiselled features and classic profile—remembering that he was the lineal descendant of the Mogul Emperors—I was moved by the sight of fallen greatness I accosted him in courtly Urdu, that being *par excellence* the language of Delhi He replied with an air of sublime indifference, but I had to rouse him from his nonchalance I was the bearer to him of a stern message from Sir John Lawrence, namely this that he was to be tried for his life, on the charge of having ordered or sanctioned the murder of many European ladies and gentlemen on or about the 11th of May 1857, that he might reserve his defence, but that anything he might say to me would be taken down and might be used against him He did, nevertheless, enter into some conversation with me, for underneath his febrile excitability there lay prudence and sagacity The sum of his statement was this that the headship of the revolution was forced upon him by men who soon passed beyond his control, but about the murders he was reticent

Just before leaving Delhi Sir John Lawrence had been displeased at the harshness with which some of the Magistrates were dealing with persons accused of complicity in the recent rebellion He consequently

caused me to write some stringent letters on this subject When we set out from Delhi, he was driving me in his gig One of the Magistrates, who had been thus addressed by me, rode up and proceeded with us for some little distance, strongly complaining to him of the letter which his Secretary had sent out The effect was laughable, for I the Secretary was there seated by the side of my Chief Sir John vindicated me, and said that the letter had been written by his direction in severe terms because the occasion demanded severity

On our way to Lahore I was badly hurt by my horse rearing upright, and then falling backwards with me under him I was able to work at my desk, however, and during the march I drafted, under Sir John Lawrence's directions, the despatch regarding Christianity in India, which afterwards attracted much notice in England In that despatch was included the phrase that—before the Native world, Christian things should be done in a Christian way Sir John had always been a religious man, and recently he had been so impressed by our providential deliverance from national peril, that he set before us all an example of devout thankfulness

At Lahore, I had to draft from verbal instructions, as well as from notes and memoranda, Sir John's Report for the Governor-General on the Mutinies in the Panjab, together with an analysis of the causes

In his view the one great cause was this that the proportion of the Sepoys to the white soldiery had been vastly too great, and that consequently the sense of power induced the Sepoy troops to revolt on the first provocation I heard him repeatedly use the words—the sense of power—as expressing the sentiment, the motive force, which drove the mutinously disposed men to madness

At this time I saw, to my great advantage, very much of Mr R N Cust, who held high employ He was one of the most accomplished men in the Civil profession I ever met He has subsequently become eminent in the furtherance of Missionary enterprise and religious work

Sir Robert Montgomery having been appointed Chief Commissioner of Oudh, telegraphed to Sir John Lawrence asking for my services for six months to help in reorganising that Province This was for me a tempting offer, but as Sir John Lawrence was not willing to part with me, I would not leave him I thus missed serving in Oudh, and oddly enough it is the only Province of British India in which I have never served

The Panjabi troops, Sikh and Moslem, had been employed to help us in suppressing the Sepoy mutiny and the Hindustani revolt They began to say that having re-established the British dominion, they might as well set up a dominion of their own During

the summer Sir John Lawrence discovered that some of these regiments, raised in the Panjab for the recapture of Delhi, and afterwards employed with distinction in Oudh, had actually formed some treasonable designs, vague at first perhaps but still dangerous in tendency There were known to be Native officers among them, men of influence who might lead a movement The danger was enhanced by the fact that, having returned to the Panjab, these troops were serving on the Trans-Indus frontier The apprehension became so positive that a movable column of European troops was despatched from Lahore to that part of the Frontier which was remote from the centres of European strength In consequence of all this I was instructed at Lahore to secretly intercept letters addressed to suspected troops Although no letter of a gravely compromising character was thus found, yet several letters touching on treasonable eventualities came under my eye Some of our loyal Natives on the frontier adopted the questionable device of sending a feigned letter of treason to see whether it elicited any response This was intercepted by me and returned to the astonished sender

Late in the autumn I joined Sir John Lawrence in camp, and marched with him to Peshawur Our route crossed the Indus at Attock by a bridge of boats under the guns of a frowning fortress, near the point where the river is now spanned by a railway

viaduct This is the most renowned river-crossing in India, perhaps in all Asia Here Alexander the Great, and divers conquerors before him or after him, have crossed sometimes in the excitement of momentous enterprise, sometimes in the depression of disaster The forceful current was confined by rock-walls on either side and its surface was treacherously smooth But recently, having been pent up by a landslip in an inner Himalayan valley, it had burst its barrier and descended with terrific power past the junction of its affluent the Caubul river It thus produced a wondrous refluence of that river, causing floods of which I could see the traces for many miles up stream This was a phenomenon rare in the history of rivers So we reached Peshawur, where I was delighted to meet my old friend Sir Herbert Edwardes, and to congratulate him on having been Warden for England here during the troubles of 1857, keeping his watch and ward at the gate of the Khyber The city is not remarkable externally, but I sketched the Moslem traders bargaining and selling under a wide-spreading tree I rode as close as possible to the mouth of the Khyber Pass, and peered into the jaws of that famous defile One day we went out hawking, and after the morning's sport was over, some owls appeared and the falcons were let go in pursuit Up went the owls straight overhead, the falcons after them, till they were all lost to sight in the sunny space After some considerable

interval the falcons returned, with long flight jaded—but no owls

One day I rode to the frontier station in the Kohat valley Sir John Lawrence told me that I should descend thither by a defile between two hill-spurs which threw out their arms into the valley with great fists He suited the action of his own arm and fist to this description I found the strong metaphor to correspond with the reality

Before we left Peshawur I was at Sir John's side when on horseback he read out to the troops the Queen's Proclamation, on the transfer of Indian affairs from the East India Company to the direct administration of the Crown He was suffering from toothache that morning, but, mastering his pain, he recited the gracious message with sonorous voice

On the return march I passed with him over the ridge of some hills, and remarked that the climate of this elevation would be good for fever-stricken invalids from Peshawur "What!"—he rejoined—"send the sick including women and children here—who would there be to guard them if assailed by murderous fanatics from the Afghan frontier?" Recrossing the Indus, I was with him when he examined the left or Indian bank of that river below Attock It was there that he would propose to receive a European invader with the river in his front, impassable in the face of opposition by his enemy, whose fate would be worse even than that

of Sisera He spoke in this sense with reference to the possibility of the British Government deciding to hand over Peshawur to our Afghan allies We earnestly discussed the question of retaining Peshawur I argued my very best in favour of the retention He listened to all my arguments, and then instructed me to draft a despatch in a different train of thought altogether, which, as in duty bound, I loyally did

Our route lay through a hilly country, and one day a tiger was lurking near our camp As no elephants were at hand, a party of four, including myself and one of Sir John's nephews, decided to hunt the beast on foot As we were starting, rifles in hand, Sir John asked to see my revolvers Perceiving that they were serviceable, he said to me—"Now mind, if the tiger fixes the claw on my nephew" (imitating with his hand the action of the claw)—"I look to you to put bullet after bullet from these revolvers into the beast's head till he loosens hold" Perched on the rocks surrounding the tiger, we poured a volley into him On his retreating to a distance we took up positions round him and fired—this process, he retreating and we firing, was once more repeated, and he died This was an instance, not common, of shooting a tiger on foot

About this time I was appointed special officer fo awarding money compensation under the regulations, t those who had suffered in property during the mutinie [illegible] part of India I thus became cognisant c

heartrending episodes, hairbreadth escapes, plundering desolation, blazing houses, rack and ruin

At Lahore Sir John Lawrence finally decided to resign charge of the Panjab and return to England, about the end of 1858, as his health was failing Before his departure he saw the Chief Commissionership of the Panjab raised to a Lieutenant-Governorship, and was appointed the first Lieutenant-Governor In this capacity he turned the first sod of the railway from Lahore to Multan to meet the line which was advancing northwards from the sea at Kurrachi I stood by him when in full uniform he received the leading Natives of Lahore and exclaimed to them—"this is indeed a great day" As the hour of leave-taking drew nigh, the Civil and Political officers of the Panjab offered him a farewell address, and I was one of the deputation that presented it He concluded his reply to us with some characteristic and memorable sayings He said that his main object had ever been to secure good men for the Administration, and, so far as possible, the very best men With such men, he declared, even a faulty system may be made to succeed—without them, even an excellent system will fail I bethought myself of the poet's verse,

"That which is best administered, is best"

The prospect of his departure caused me to reconsider my own position I had been Secretary long enough If I could not at once rise to some higher

status, it were better for me to obtain an executive post, where I might exercise my individual responsibility, and so prove my fitness for the positions to which I should ultimately aspire Sir John Lawrence sympathising with this opinion of mine, appointed me to be the Commissioner of the Lahore Division I at once made over charge of my Secretariat to Mr (now Sir Henry) Davies, who afterwards became Lieutenant-Governor of the Panjab My new Division, or Commissionership, included the districts surrounding the capital of the Panjab, and stretching from the Chenab to the Satlej at Ferozepore near the battlefields of Sobraon and Ferozshah I had only just taken charge in the beginning of 1859 when the new Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Robert Montgomery, arrived

I was now at the head of the Executive in a large territory, with many officers under me The whole Civil administration, the Courts of Justice civil and criminal, the magistracy and the police, the collection of the revenue, and everything that in the English of to-day is comprised under the name of "local government"—were all under my supervision Furthermore I was special judge for the trial of Thuggee-murder cases, brought forward by the Thuggee department from all parts of the Panjab These cases afforded me a weird and lurid experience In order to test the credibility of the informers or approvers, I used to cross-examine them as to how the deeds of Thuggee

were perpetrated They would often, with darkly gleaming eyes, suit their gestures to their words I could thus see exactly how the victims had been suddenly pinioned and strangled

During the winter I resumed my sketching, lest it should fall into desuetude, and afforded just a small fraction of my time to wild sports One day a long-legged and long-winded boar—unlike the short-legged and short-tempered boars in some parts of India—gave us a protracted run of several miles At length, his breath failing, he squatted, and after a few seconds charged us as we came up Receiving several spear-wounds from us, he retired inside a clump and tuft of jungle from which we failed to drive him If we approached this thicket-lair his fierce grunts made our horses rear up Two gallant hounds bearded him in this way, but soon emerged mortally stricken by his tusks At last I sent to my camp for elephants, but when, after the lapse of an hour, they entered the thicket to stamp him out of it, he was found dead

By the beginning of spring I had, as usual, ridden round my territories, when I was urgently summoned by Sir Robert Montgomery to meet him at Lahore, my headquarters He then explained to me the information which had reached him—in confirmation of current rumours—regarding a threatened mutiny among the European soldiers who had been the servants of the late East India Company Of this category there were then

at or near Lahore about five hundred artillerymen, old soldiers, and four hundred newly raised cavalry, somewhat raw troopers On the other hand there were two battalions of infantry of the Queen's regular army Sir Robert intimated to me that mutinous communications were likely to come from the artillerymen at Meerut (in the North-Western Provinces) to the artillerymen at Lahore—that he himself was obliged to leave Lahore—but that he depended on my intercepting any such communications, should they be on their way Taking steps accordingly, I intercepted several harmless letters—which went on to the addressees—and I began to hope that, after all, nothing would be discovered But early one morning I got hold of a letter purporting to come from the artillery at Meerut It gave some account of preparations for mutiny, the men had met at "the monkey tank", they would "make a fine gale of it," and then they would march on Delhi It urged their artillery comrades at Lahore to rise simultaneously From internal evidence I could not doubt the genuineness of this letter Now, I had been accustomed to see treason expressed in more than one of the vernacular languages But to see it thus in a European handwriting and in my own language, gave a shock that made me breathe hard for a moment, and, indeed, beads of moisture stood on my brow Keeping my countenance before the Natives about me, bathing and breakfasting as if nothing were in the wind, I drove

over to the chief military officer, General Windham, and showed him the letter He agreed with me as to its genuineness, and had evidently been prepared by various symptoms for bad news So he received this startling intelligence with steady coolness Later in the day there came a note from him, intimating that the artillerymen had just refused to go on duty, and requesting me to accompany him that evening to the barracks, as a witness in case any grave event should occur I accordingly went with him, and we were attended by only two Staff officers On entering the barracks we beheld the unique spectacle of European soldiers in mutiny, though in a form milder than I should have expected They did not threaten us with violence, but they laughed, jeered, mocked and shouted at us. They then surrounded us in an excited circle Unwise words might have provoked violence in an instant If even a hand had struck us, the moral effect would have transcended any physical consequence But the General's words were wise and pacifying He said that if there were any lawful grievance, they had the means of properly representing it Meanwhile, awaiting a reply from the Government, they were bound to obey their officers against whom they had no complaint His manly appeal quieted them a little, and they began to speak of their grievance, with that bated breath and suppressed tone which indicated the heat of passion Their point was this, that they ought

not to be transferred from the East India Company to the Crown without a fresh engagement being made with them They said that the conditions of their service ought not to be broken or changed without their consent, and that they should not be turned over from the Company to anyone else unless they were first asked They declared that they were being handed over like cattle from one owner to another The General then said that the next morning every man must attend to state his complaint to the officer who would be appointed for receiving the same Thereon we left, and proceeded to the cavalry barracks, where a similar scene occurred, with the same conclusion

The next morning I went to see the men going one by one before the appointed officer, each man having his complaint taken down—the general tenour being that they claimed their discharge from the service Thereafter they returned to duty as before In the result, all those who desired their discharge were allowed to take it I do not pause to recount the origin of this formidable crisis, which extended to many other military stations besides Lahore Nor shall I dwell upon the wisdom and forbearance by which Lord Canning and Lord Clyde averted the peril I wrote to Sir John Lawrence, who had now become a Member of the Council of India in London, explaining that the Government had been legally and technically

in the right, and the soldiers in the wrong—whatever might be the merits or demerits of the statesmanship He replied that the question had all along been one not for lawyers but for statesmen

I had to watch the effect of this grave event on the mind of the Natives in and about the capital of the Panjab I found them to be affected not nearly so much as might have been apprehended They did indeed use the inauspicious expression that "the Europeans were setting fire to their own house" They had also feared lest European soldiers, breaking loose from discipline, should take to plundering But, fortunately for us, they could not believe that their European masters would really fight among themselves

Soon after these occurrences, while the Native mind was still unsettled in Lahore—which is mainly a Moslem city — the festival of the Muharram was approaching, and this, too, in the hot season The feeling between the two rival sects of Shiahs and Sunnis was even more acute than ever, and some bloody affrays were anticipated So I and the Magistrate of the district, Mr (afterwards Sir Robert) Egerton, decided to ride about the streets during the first part of the important night, and also early in the following morning, in order that we might answer for order by our personal presence During that night I attended one of the Shiah gatherings unobserved in a gallery I listened to recitations in Urdu, some of

the most beautiful I have ever heard in any language The orator intoned verse after verse, setting forth the pains and sorrows of the two martyrs Hasan and Hosên To each verse the vast audience gave a set response with sighs and tears, with beating of the breast The people were indeed quivering with emotion By patrolling the streets with a mounted escort I and the Magistrate kept them free from disturbance I retired for a short rest after midnight, but had to be in the saddle again by four o'clock in the morning I knew that the crisis must be about sunrise when Shiah processions would be moving, each of them having a grey horse conspicuously led, to represent the martyr's steed, with arrows ingeniously fastened to him, like the bristles of the porcupine, and with red liquid trickling down his flanks to indicate blood This spectacle was well known to infuriate the Sunnis beyond endurance We dreaded that, when these processions passed through two of the arched gates of the city, there would be an ugly rush of Sunnis If such a rush were successfully made, bloodshed must ensue So the Magistrate took one gate, I the other, and happily neither gate was forced by the Sunni charge In front of my gate I sat on a powerful country-bred horse that would not let any crowd come near his hind-quarters I warned the on-pressing multitude to beware of him, and he soon made them stand off

Soon I attended a more pacific and graceful function, namely the opening of the Bari Doab Canal This result, the fond hope of the Lawrence brothers and of Robert Napier, had at length been brought about under Captain Dyas The canal was to store the waters of the rivers Ravi and Beas, in order to conduct them through the heart of the Sikh country proper, fertilising the finest lands in the Panjab It was to bring to the Sikhs a message of peace and blessing from their foreign rulers, the like of which no indigenous Government would have had the science and the resources to convey As the water was let into its new channel, on a signal given by a European lady, the spectacle in the clear weather was inspiriting Our northern horizon was whitened from end to end by the Himalayan snowy range We gazed at these perennial snow-fields as Nature's reservoirs for the water-power now being utilised in the service of man

I then obtained a month's leave to visit Cashmere under the kind auspices of the Maharaja of Jammu and Cashmere, the Native Sovereign of that country The snow-clad passes would be open to passengers in the beginning of June just as the Swiss Alpine passes are I rode over a pass (the very one by which the Mogul Emperors used to travel) by a bridle-path cut narrow through walls of snow Riding on, I beheld the Vale of Cashmere in summer verdure spread out far below me This powerfully affected one who

like me, had a few days previously been breathing the heated air as it blew over a baked earth with withered vegetation Descending to the lowlands, I glided luxuriously in a gilded barge down the gently winding Jhelum, with "Lalla Rookh" in my hand, wondering at the skill and learning with which the poet had woven beautiful facts of every complexion into his story I crossed the lake watching the aquatic plants with their seemingly endless stems in the depths of the pellucid water I stood in the Imperial summer-house where the poet laid the scene of "the feast of roses" At dawn one day I ascended the rocky hill which juts out into the midst of the valley From that vantage-point a full panorama of Cashmere can be obtained So there I sat till nightfall, sketching this panorama which has snow-clad mountains on its horizon in all four quarters of the compass—or in other words, a complete circle of snow The vapours were infinite, being drawn by a hot sun from a humid valley, replete with streams and lakes, while the proximity of the snow caused rapid chilling of the temperature These vapours would be in the morning tipped with vermilion, would be white fleecy masses at noonday moving across the azure, would lie at eventide like ethereal rose-beds The features of the scenery comprised the snowy peak, the cedar forest, the rocks of gneiss or porphyry, the chain of lakes, the river meandering like a serpent with silvery scales,

the city with cupolas and housetops, the citadel right over the water's edge For me, as the sketcher, the difficulty consisted in the variety of the objects under the ceaseless round of atmospheric changes But this time of fourteen hours made up the best day's sketching I ever had in my life

The evenings were enlivened with entertainments provided by the officials of the Native Sovereign I heard melodious though somewhat monotonous singing, accompanied by those stringed instruments which had for centuries lulled and diverted the Eastern conquerors, who took their ease and their holidays in this paradise of the earth as they called it I saw dances performed by the women, famed throughout Northern India for their beauty—not with the extreme energy of action which I had noted in Europe, but with graceful gentility, flowing robes, appropriate gestures, and on the whole with the poetry of motion I studied the shawls, with their matchless colouring which can be produced only by the pure water of this valley In shops, with balconies overhanging the river, I examined the art-industries the lacquer-work, the iron inlaid with the precious metals

In the midst of these diversions I received information from my headquarters at Lahore which caused me to hasten my departure I travelled rapidly by the route which led through Jammu, the capital of the State, so that I might pay my respects to

the Native Sovereign and thank him for all his kindness

On my return to Lahore I found that a certain sort of trouble was seething or simmering both among the Sikhs and the Moslems—such symptoms being to the dangers which we had surmounted what the *sequelæ* are to a disease, what the after-swell is to a tornado

In regard to the Moslems, I learned that fanatical priests were giving political addresses in the mosques, and such preaching could have but one end, namely disaffection at least, perhaps even treason So I assembled all the Moslem priests, and lawyers learned in the sacred law, to meet me in the open vestibule of the Vizier's mosque in the heart of the city, under a stately portico beautifully enamelled with an art no longer known I was quite unattended and took off my white helmet on rising to address them, as they were seated in a large circle on the marble and the tesselated pavement As I looked round upon the men with their massive white turbans and keen countenances amidst the architectural glories of their faith and race—the picture was a striking one I assured them of my personal regard, as evidenced by the pains I had taken to learn their language and study their traditions I dilated on the religious freedom they enjoyed under our rule, reminding them of the Emperor's mosque close by, which had been desecrated for a powder

magazine by the Sikhs, and had under us been restored to its proper uses But I would not suffer any of them to turn the mosques into meeting-rooms for discussing political prospects, still less into hotbeds of sedition I trusted that most, if not all, of them would be above attempting such an abuse as that I was assured soon afterwards by my old friend Mr Edward Thornton—who was then virtually Chief Justice in the Panjab, styled Judicial Commissioner—that this proceeding of mine had produced a sobering effect on the Moslem mind at Lahore

But I had to deal somewhat more stringently with some among the Sikhs at Lahore From information received, it appeared that a certain person had treasonable papers in his possession I knew that the mere finding of a document in a man's house is not enough, for the accused might say that it was put there by an enemy The discovery of these particular papers, if they existed, must be made in a manner beyond cavil or dispute, so I resolved to attempt it myself At night accompanied by a Magistrate and an escort, I rode down to the city, quite unexpected, right up to the house in question, and surrounded it with guards Demanding entrance I walked upstairs and caused two persons to be arrested by the Magistrate on a written charge and a warrant In their presence a certain chest was impounded and then opened Certain bundles of papers, also in their presence, were taken out and

enclosed in a packet which was then sealed up The next morning this packet of papers was inspected by another Magistrate in the presence of the accused Upon the strength of their contents, together with other evidence, the accused were committed for trial on a charge of treason before the Judicial Commissioner, a high officer superior to me Finding that they were convicted and sentenced to transportation, I had them conveyed by speedy transit and with strong escort to Multan, out of sight and hearing, so that they should disappear just as a stone cast into the water forms a circlet and sinks

Afterwards I performed the pleasing function of attending the wedding at Puttiala The eldest son of that sovereign house was to be married The loyal Prince of that Native State—a man of a commanding stature, and of steady nerve almost British in its quality—had been of signal service to our cause during the gloomiest days of the Mutinies, and we were all anxious to do him honour I and other European officers of position were hospitably entertained in summer-houses, with cooling fountains and umbrageous gardens The troops not only of Puttiala, but also of the neighbouring and kindred Native States, were present, with distinctive armament and accoutrement They were all marshalled to take part in the ceremonial display, sparkling in the sunlight with varied insignia The parade of elephants was emblematic of Oriental

pomp Every prince or chieftain had his group of these richly caparisoned animals, each of them having a driver seated like a horseman on its neck, and a howdah like a decorated tower on its back These creatures were so entirely under the control of their drivers that they moved in disciplined array, keeping their time and place according to the programme The *ensemble* of many elephants in movement is curiously picturesque, from their broad foreheads, their huge waving ears, their sinuous trunks, their expansive flanks, their shambling gait,—the combined effect being set off by their gorgeous trappings So this living mass of magnificence rolled and swayed along, six animals abreast in a line of vast length through streets crowded to the housetops by gazers, who were dumbfounded with awe and admiration In the evening the lakes, the tanks and the surrounding groves, were aglow, aflame with innumerable lamps shining double over the water At a signal the pyrotechnic display began Mimic squares of infantry blazed with musket-firing, and castles in the air boomed forth their cannonading The rain from the rockets descended in golden showers upon laughter-loving crowds Mock volcanoes from the lake-side belched forth balls of ruby, of emerald, of lurid violet

In the early winter Lord Canning visited Lahore on a viceregal tour His Lordship was formally received on the plain that lies between the city and the river Ravi

Here were placed the several Commissioners who, like myself, were at the head of large territories in the Panjab Each of them was on horseback, and with him were the principal Native chiefs, nobles, gentry of his jurisdiction, they being proud to follow as he was to lead It was a gallant show like what we read of in the shows of mediæval chivalry Each of us glanced round to see which set of men looked best where all were looking well Without vain assumption I thought that, we being local with all our resources on the spot, my men made the largest display, but that some of my brother Commissioners, especially those from Himalayan regions, had finer and more striking personalities in their cavalcades Afterwards I heard Lord Canning deliver his oration in English to the Durbar, or assemblage of all that was noblest in the Panjabi people As he flushed with speaking his face, head, and stature were admirable, and his delivery most impressive Indeed, I have never heard a speech of a formal character better delivered I had the honour of escorting Lady Canning to the best points of view of Lahore for sketching and then leaving her to paint at leisure She enquired with affectionate solicitude whether Lord Canning's safety had been effectually secured by local precautions, and I gave her every assurance The veil of the future hid from me the knowledge that her lovely life was soon to vanish from mortal vision, and that I should see her noble face no more

Before their departure, a grand illumination was organised by the Lahore municipality This was to be followed by fireworks let off from the towers near the Emperor's mosque, after the distinguished spectators on their elephants had passed well beyond the building and its precincts We had given the strictest order that no firework was to be touched till the big procession was quite clear of the place, because elephants are notoriously shy of the pyrotechnic flash and rattle Our procession passed through the brilliantly lighted city without a hitch Though the natives had not yet learned to cheer as Europeans do, still an indefinite sound of joyous acclamation filled the air So we approached the Emperor's mosque, when, to my horror, the pyrotechnic men, catching sight of the procession, began, in contravention of orders and against common sense, to let off the fireworks I knew that these men must have lost their head, and that the danger was extreme—for the elephants would instantly break out into the wildest confusion Upon the creatures were seated the Governor-General, the Commander-in-Chief, the Lieutenant-Governor, and all the most eminent persons, ladies and gentlemen, of Northern India Providentially I and the Magistrate, Mr Egerton, were leading the procession, our elephants were steady and were made instantly to kneel We alone were able to stop the fireworks, happily we were on foot and on the spot to do so The fireworks were stopped

accordingly before much harm was done But some of the elephants had become perilously restive, and alarm had been excited, one of my friends too had been hurt I knew, perhaps better than anyone else, how narrow the escape had been, and how a joyous occasion might, almost in the twinkling of an eye, have been turned into a portentous accident through the pyrotechnic men, Natives, disobeying orders The incident fixed in my mind a lesson, which indeed I had previously learnt, namely this that it is never safe in a critical situation, where presence of mind is required, to leave a Native executive without a European officer in charge

On the whole I had during this year 1859, a happy time with the people of Lahore A great part of the Panjabi aristocracy were there Most of the rising men, too, of all classes, whether priestly or territorial or commercial or official, were congregated in the capital The spell of our victory in war and our success in peace was upon them If they must acquiesce in the inevitable, they would do so with a good grace The land settlements had delighted their country cousins My own policy towards their estates had inspired them with confidence The sunshine of British favour might be sickly, still they would bask therein Generally they, like me, had an equestrian turn and aptitude. On public occasions nothing seemed to amuse them so much as to ride forth with me in a gay cavalcade

I dwelt in an old mosque repaired and fitted up for European habitation It had a portico and a vestibule for the reception of Native company—which was just what I desired Ordinarily in the mornings about eight o'clock I returned from my rounds on horseback, after inspecting public works and institutions There remained a good hour before breakfast, during which interval I held daily in my portico and vestibule a small levée for the Native gentry They sat about, at their ease in the roomy and lofty apartments I said a few words of civility to each one of them Many of them would have some business with me Each one of these would in turn be admitted to my study, and say his say in my friendly ear

Almost absorbed in these affairs, for which my previous training had undoubtedly fitted me—I was beginning to forget my notions of ulterior ambition—when I was aroused by a new apparition Mr James Wilson, the English economist and financier, had been sent out from England as Finance Minister to India He visited Lahore during the last days of 1859 As chief civil officer of the country round about Lahore, I was summoned to attend him Naturally he enquired into the fiscal and economic affairs of the Panjab, and I, as in duty bound, gave answer to the best of my knowledge From my practice in the Settlement operations and in the Secretariat, I naturally had the finances, the statistics, the economics, of the Panjab

very much at my fingers' ends I had no ulterior thought at all, but it turned out that I was, unconsciously, and for the third time in my life, "dancing before Herod" He went, however, as he had come, and I reverted to my routine

Early in 1860, I had one morning, in the frosty hours before sunrise, been sitting by a stove and writing a minute for the Judicial Commissioner, with reasons why a certain death-sentence ought to take effect Such proceedings were not uncommon with me, and I little thought that this was to be the last minute from me in the Panjab At sunrise I rode out as usual and on returning to the portico of my dwelling, filled with my Native friends, I received a note from Sir Robert Montgomery the Lieutenant-Governor I held my little levée for them, and then drove off to Sir Robert's mansion He showed me a letter from Lord Canning to the effect that I was to be a special assistant to Mr Wilson in all branches of the Finance Ministry, and to be the head of a new Paper Currency department This fresh departure was astonishing, but it opened out a vista of possible promotion without end, and my acceptance was telegraphed to Calcutta

The Civil and Military officers at Lahore were so good as to entertain me at a farewell banquet—the first compliment of that nature which I had ever received as yet My old friend Mr Edward Thornton

presided, and with the friendly enthusiasm around me, the speech-making, the interchange of good wishes, I was joyous These friends too I should, under Providence, meet again either in India or in England

But when I came to part with my Native friends, the case was different I might be leaving them for ever, and they knew it My departure too might possibly make untold difference to their comfort On the day of my leaving Lahore, about two hundred of the principal among them assembled opposite my familiar portico, all on horseback, in bright costumes, forming a gallant cavalcade I rode out with them for the last time some four miles, as far as the old Mogul gardens at Shalimar There I had to dismount and enter my travelling horse-van So I spoke my final words to them standing in front of the old Moslem gateway under the umbrageous trees They replied—"we are sure you will return to us—but then it will be with a salute of artillery" By this they meant to say that I should return one day as their Lieutenant-Governor—which then indeed seemed likely enough But they did not foresee that although I might become Lieutenant-Governor or Governor—it would be not for them, but for other races—not for the Panjab, but for other provinces

CHAPTER VII

(1860–1)—ROVING COMMISSIONS

Service with Mr Wilson the Finance Minister—His death—Uncertainty of my position at Calcutta—Death of Mr George Barnes—My deputation to Burmah—Visit to Mysore—Mission to Hyderabad in the Deccan—Audience of the Nizam—Visit to Sir George Clerk at Poona—Caves of Ellora—Deputation to Nagpore—Marble rocks near Jubbulpore—Flying visit to Gwalior and Lucknow—Interview with Lord Canning—Mr Laing's advice—I am appointed to officiate as Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces—Résumé of the several steps in my career

I WAS in January 1860 to enter on a fresh sphere remote from my previous experience At thirty-three years of age I had run through the ordinary and regular line of the Civil Service—having exercised the functions of Magistrate, Collector, Judge, Commissioner To all this I had added the duties of Secretary to the Government of a great Province, which position was outside the line Being proud of my new position, in the very centre of imperial affairs, I paused not to reflect on its peculiarity and its uncertainty

I was cordially welcomed on arriving at Calcutta by my new master Mr Wilson I became his Chief Assistant and personal Secretary for all matters pertaining to his financial policy Indeed I soon was on the same terms of official intimacy with him as those

on which I had been with Sir John Lawrence But there was this difference that my position was personal with Mr Wilson, and was outside the regular Secretariat of the Government of India It thus depended first on Mr Wilson during his pleasure or his life, and then upon Lord Canning with whose sanction it had been made

In a very few weeks the range of my work was so wide and diversified as to tax my brain power to the utmost Mr Wilson had recently introduced his Income Tax measure into the Legislative Council, and I was to help in settling the details to be embodied by the Law officers in the draft bill He had a Paper Currency scheme with Circles extending all over India, and I had to sketch out these with reference to many languages and nationalities He procured the constitution of two Commissions, the one for Military the other for Civil Finance, and I was a member of both There were Commissions, one for the reorganisation of the Police throughout India—and one for the investigation of the agrarian troubles relating to the cultivation of indigo in Bengal, of which my old friend Mr W S Seton-Karr was President, and I was a member of these also I was not Mr Wilson's representative formally on these several bodies, but I was doubtless regarded as virtually such by the people at large Then his policy, received at first with éclat and applause, soon met with the criticism which strong measures always

encounter, and I had to assist him in conducting the controversies which arose I then graduated, so to speak, in a subject that had not fallen within my previous experience—namely the course of European public opinion at Indian centres, as manifested by the English Press in India The new experience, thus gained, stood me in good stead afterwards

So the hot season wore on, and the bond of union between Mr Wilson and me became closer every day, while I little suspected that underneath his alacrity and vivacity there lay hid the seed of an insidious disease When the rains set in he became affected with dysentery One evening while transacting business with him, I noticed that he put up his legs and feet on a chair in Oriental fashion, which he had never done before I naturally enquired how he felt, and though I knew, from my own experience thirteen years before, how dangerous his ailment was, it was yet hard to believe that I should never see him in life again after that evening Such, however, proved to be the case unhappily, for when he went to bed that night he never rose again His illness grew and waxed every hour, he saw none outside his family save Lord Canning, whom he had asked to come and see him before the end, and he died at night after a few days' illness The morning after his death I called at his house and instinctively walked into the familiar library off the hall on the

ground floor, little imagining what I should find there For I beheld the corpse carefully and reverently laid out on the large table The cheeks were emaciated by the wasting sickness, but the facial expression and the massive brow were the same as of yore At the request of the family I had immediately to proceed a short way down the Hooghly, to meet the steamer from England and break the news to a relative who was coming to join the Staff of the late Minister I conducted the distressed gentleman to the house of mourning A member of the family received us at the front door with the exclamation—"What a meeting" That same evening the funeral took place, the broad road to the cemetery was blocked for full two miles by mourning coaches and carriages A dense circle of eminent persons, with Lord Canning in front of them, was gathered round the grave where political genius was being buried

The next day Mr Halsey, of the Civil Service, the late Mr Wilson's Private Secretary and near relative, showed me a slip of paper, with a message dictated by the dying Minister, and containing a request that I would compile a memoir of his Indian policy, as being the only man who could do it as he would wish it to be done A few days later I was summoned to attend Lord Canning at Government House His Lordship then informed me that, in the farewell interview shortly before death, Mr Wilson had most earnestly

commended me to the care of the Governor-General He added that he would manage to maintain my position so far as that might be possible I took this opportunity of mentioning Mr Wilson's last message to me regarding the compilation of a memoir His Lordship indicated to me the difficulties there might be in the discharge of such a task in the then circumstances Though touched and moved by Mr Wilson's most kind remembrance of me, I never was able to write a memoir of his brief but eventful career in India until many years afterwards

Notwithstanding Lord Canning's gracious assurance, I found my position lost for the moment by Mr Wilson's death So to speak, the ground was cut from under my feet, and I was in the air By the end of the year the new Finance Minister Mr Samuel Laing arrived, and I was nominally in the same situation under him as under his predecessor — yet my position was nothing like the same, though he was kind to me in a degree which I thankfully remember I still continued sitting on the several Commissions which had been constituted in Mr Wilson's time, and was, so far, fully employed Among other things I had to with the financial arrangements for abolishing the Indian Navy, and for substituting the importation of salt from England for the old manufacture of that article on the seashore of Bengal The President of the Military Finance Commission was

Colonel Balfour, afterwards Sir George and a Member of Parliament It was very instructive for me to be his colleague, for he was one of the best military financiers in India Among our coadjutors was Colonel G Malleson then a rising author, and subsequently distinguished in English literature as a historian and a biographer

Besides my official work, I rescued the "Calcutta Review" from extinction, resolved that a periodical which had shed lustre on Anglo-Indian literature should not perish without a hand being stretched forth to save it So I together with Dr George Smith, who had succeeded to the charge of the "Friend of India," sustained the "Calcutta Review" for a whole year, he saw to the printing and to the business while I attended to the editing For each quarterly number, I determined beforehand what subjects should be treated, and then I found competent friends to write articles on them Afterwards the Review fell into good hands and entered on a new life At this time Sir Robert Napier (afterwards Lord Napier of Magdâla) had returned victorious from China His old friends from the Panjab and elsewhere, among whom Colonel (afterwards Sir Dighton) Probyn was conspicuous, gave in his honour an entertainment in Fort William, to which the society of Calcutta was invited I had the pleasure of proposing his health on that occasion

Fortunately I had an ally in the Governor-General's

Council, namely my old friend Sir Bartle Frere With his support I might indeed swim, without that I seemed likely to sink The high officials around the Government of India regarded me as an outsider introduced by the late Mr Wilson My position indeed was drifting into nothingness, for a Civil Servant must ordinarily belong to some Division of the Empire But I had abandoned the North-Western Provinces and the Panjab, and my place in Northern India knew me no more I had cheerfully done this on the faith of being sooner or later attached to the Government of India And now, if not admitted to its permanent staff, I was nowhere I wondered why Lord Canning did not cause me to be so admitted, as several opportunities for that were arising at the time But, unknown to me, His Lordship had another and a better design For more than a whole year, that is from the end of 1861 to the beginning of 1862, he employed me on Roving Commissions in distant provinces, and on subjects wherein the Government of India was financially interested In this capacity I visited British Burmah, a part of the Madras Presidency, the Nizam's Deccan, the Nagpore Province, and the Nerbudda territories

Before describing this peculiarly interesting work, I pause for an instant to recount a mournful episode My cousin Mr George Barnes, one of the most rising men in the Civil Service, had come from his station in the Himalaya to Calcutta as acting Foreign Secre-

tary This was in the spring season when dysentery often attacks newcomers in Bengal He was dangerously attacked, and had to retrace his steps towards Northern India From the then railway terminus at Raniganj—not very far from Calcutta—he had advanced less than two days' journey into the interior by horse van, when he became much worse and telegraphed to me I hastened to his side to nurse him in his mortal peril While thus engaged, I received news by telegraph that Mr Laing had also been seized with dysentery and was going for a short voyage to sea I remained with Baines till almost his last breath, having taken the Holy Communion with him I then hurried back to Calcutta to meet Mr Laing before he sailed, in case he should have any instructions to give me

I now follow the course of my tours on the Roving Commissions Proceeding by sea from Calcutta to Burmah at the end of 1860, with Colonel Herbert Bruce as my colleague, I had an escape from a threatened trouble off the coast of Arracan Heavy rain set in, followed by dense fog, while we were near a rock-bound coast Nautical observations were impracticable, and ocean-currents at a pace of several miles an hour were carrying us away from our assumed position At length the vapoury curtain lifted, and we steamed into the pretty bay of Akyab, where I halted to learn about the affairs of Arracan. Thence

we steamed without further mishap to the mouth of the Irawaddy When we proceeded up the river, the gilded Pagoda of Rangoon met my gaze as it shot up like an obelisk of flame into the sky I observed all that was new to a man from India, the difference of natural objects, of domestic architecture, of nationality, of features and stature, of faith and language—under the good guidance of Colonel (afterwards Sir Arthur) Phayre In company with him, my colleague Colonel Bruce and I proceeded in a steamer up the river as far as Meeaday the then frontier of Ava The border-line ran through dense bamboo forests On our return voyage we visited Prome on the river-bank The city lay at the base of a conical hill which was covered and crowned with gilt pinnacles of pagodas, so that it looked like a pyramid of fire in the rays of the setting sun At the foot of a separate pagoda I saw an assemblage of Booddhist priests in their saffron-coloured robes, forming a splendid foreground to the rich green foliage of bamboo and plantain, and to the carved teak wood architecture, surmounted again by the never-failing light of the gilded finial Returning to Rangoon, we crossed the Bay or Gulf to Moulmein the capital of Tenasserim Behind the city of Moulmein there rises up a pagoda-crowned hill. From its summit stretched one of the finest panoramic views in our Eastern Empire Three fine rivers were seen winding through a vast champaign

of rice-fields, and then joining the same great arm of the sea The green plain was in parts picturesquely broken by sharp ridges of red rock, and in the background there stretched a long blue range dividing Tenasserim from Siam Returning to Calcutta I and my colleague submitted recommendations for joining the three Provinces, of Pegu, Tenasserim, and Arracan, into one Chief Commissionership to be styled British Burmah Shortly afterwards the Government of India ordered the constitution of British Burmah, based upon our Report, as was set forth in the Gazette

During the rainy season of 1861 I started on my mission to Hyderabad, or the Nizam's Deccan My instructions in the first place were to consider the cost of the Subsidiary Force, maintained by the British Government under treaties at Hyderabad, in return for certain territories in the Madras Presidency known as the Ceded Districts I went by sea to Madras as I had primarily to confer with the Governor there, Sir William Denison Thence I journeyed towards the Ceded Districts, and made a détour in order to see Mysore under the kind auspices of an old Panjab friend Mr C B Saunders I paid my respects to the political phantom, an old man who bore the title of Raja of Mysore and lived in the royal palace He received us with all ceremony, almost as much as if he had been a reigning king His hall of audience, with its arched roof and rows of massive pillars, represented the irony

of fate for him At the end of it was the historic picture, in which he figured as a youth being placed on the throne of his ancestors by the British Delegates, after the fall of Seringapatam and the death of Tippoo If he still possessed the power of reflecting, this picture, hanging in his own State apartment, must have reminded him of his wasted youth and degraded manhood, of an auspicious beginning reduced to a miserable end by his own faults and foibles I then visited Seringapatam, a veritably dead city—more melancholy than a place in ruins, or a desert with traces of former habitation I wandered past the breach, once stormed by British valour, into street after street, with the houses all standing but quite tenantless In one corner only of the expanse of vacant habitations did I find any inhabitants Treading the grass-grown squares, I felt as if followed by the ghost of the valorous but ill-starred Tippoo

Thence I turned my face northwards to Bellary, the principal place in the Ceded Districts Having discussed matters with the authorities there, I passed on towards Hyderabad in a van drawn by bullocks Reaching the palatial Residency at Hyderabad, I presented Lord Canning's letter as my credential to the Resident Colonel Davidson, who received me cordially In company with him I went to pay my respects to His Highness the Nizam We put on slippers over our shoes before appearing in the Presence His

Highness received us with an air of superlative politeness and celestial indifference He had the fine physique of his Mogul race both in face and stature, and as he sat on his platform clothed in shining silks, he looked, although a Moslem, like the image of a Hindu god Among those standing around the dais of the throne were several Arab chiefs, commanding bodies of Arabian troops in His Highness's service There was in their countenance and mien a sense of reserve power, the sagacity of the fox with the grit and courage of the lion—which marked them out from the more refined Deccanis Two of these were indicated to me as the men who, if the British power had been overthrown in 1857, would have risen from the ashes of the Nizam's dynasty, and set up an Arab power in the heart of India There I made the acquaintance of the Nizam's Minister, Salar Jung, then rising into fame He was the most refined Moslem I ever met, the mark of high caste was set upon his whole aspect Tall and slim in figure youthful in face, aquiline in profile, olive in complexion, soft in manner yet thoughtful and resolute in expression, elegant in dress, from the narrow and exquisitely folded turban of the purest white, to the embroidered border of the long and richly coloured robe, he looked the courtly statesman In the tablelands of this region the rainy season is often delightful out of doors So, favoured by a break in the rains,

the Resident gave a picnic at Golconda to a large number of friends ladies and gentlemen Golconda is not, like Seringapatam, a dead city and therefore miserable On the contrary it is romantic as being a city of the dead, for it is a cluster of regal mausolea with swelling domes, and with a citadel-rock in the background Among these resting-places of a historic dynasty our tents were pitched for the festive occasion

From Hyderabad I journeyed to the confines of the Bombay Presidency—visiting the Moslem ruins at Bedar on the way, and wondering at the quaint angularity of outline combined with richness of colouring The matchless hues were produced by artistic processes now lost The rains fell in sheets of water, and my long-suffering bullocks dragged me with difficulty through the black loamy soil, till I arrived at the railway terminus with a thankful heart Thence I soon reached Poona on a flying visit to the Governor Sir George Clerk There I sketched the lake with the rocky island crowned with temples, from the topmost terrace of which the last of the Mahratta Peshwas viewed the battlefield where his dynasty fell to rise no more

Thence I travelled northwards to the citadel-rock of Doulatabad, looming black with a mighty elevation The breezes that blow round this wondrous rock are laden with the voices of human passion, suffering,

heroism, fortitude The defence of this last refuge of the brave, by Hindus against Moslems, has been the theme of romance in European as well as in Oriental languages Near here I gazed on the humble grave-stone of Aurangzebe the last of the Great Moguls —exposed to the storms and the blasts of heaven according to the requirements of Moslem orthodoxy At the end of a long reign, broken in health and spirit, conscious of a life-long failure despite the noblest opportunities—he alighted here, saying that he had fought his last fight and ridden his last march When I saw the superb mausolea of his imperial predecessors in Northern India, I hardly hoped ever to see his lowly resting-place—at last, however, I saw it The leaden sky and the drenching rain intensified the sombreness of my contemplation Close by were the Caves of Ellora, of which I had mysterious notions gathered from pictures seen in boyhood It is hard for a painter to convey to our minds the reality of these rock-hewn temples, which are probably unique in the world They are the landmarks of the greatest revolution that ever befell the Hindus— namely the overthrow of Boodhism and the restoration of Hinduism in its Brahmanic form I paced the cavernous recesses, and in the dim light traced the carving and sculpture of the gloomy chambers I essayed that which is perhaps impossible, by making an elaborate water-colour sketch of the rock-cut temple,

carved in one vast black mass from out of the rocky hillside and then encased with imperishable pigments To enhance the darkling colours of the scene, the waters of the rainy season, oozing and trickling out of the crevices of the scarped mountain, gave to the plutonic rocks the lines of polished ebony and glittering jet Thence my draught bullocks struggled through the deep ruts of the soaked loam across the cotton-fields of Berar, and on to Nagpore

I halted for a while at Nagpore to confer with Colonel Elliot, the Commissioner of that Province There I first came in contact with that Mahratta nationality with which I was destined thereafter to be familiar The Mahratta was not imposing at first sight with his short and broad-shouldered stature, high cheek-bone, short nose and scanty beard—in contrast with others whom I had recently seen—the Moslem whose progenitors came from the ancient Ariana, or the Rajput who claimed descent from the sun and moon I had yet to learn that a volcano of sentiment may be latent beneath that humble exterior I admired the teak-wood palace of the Bhonsla or Mahratta dynasty, the finest specimen of architecture with carved wood then existing in India I was fortunate in beholding this work then, for it was shortly afterwards destroyed by fire My stay was slightly prolonged by an accident on horseback in boar-hunting, as my horse, refusing to face the beast,

reared upright and fell backwards I learned from Lord Canning that, according to proposals which had been made, the Nagpore Province, together with the Nerbudda territories, would be formed into a Chief Commissionership with the title of the Central Provinces

I then journeyed northwards on my way to the Nerbudda territories, discarding bullocks and adopting the palanquin on men's shoulders Thus I plunged into the forests of the Sautpura mountains, which form a range running from East to West right athwart the Continent of India I then descended to the valley of the river Nerbudda second only to the Ganges in sanctity among Hindus During this journey the performances of the bearers, who bore my palanquin, made me appreciate the enduring quality of the Native physique Repeatedly I saw these wiry fellows go for fifteen miles, then halt for an hour to squat on the ground and smoke a pipe with a full bowl and long tube, called the hubble-bubble from the sound it emitted They would next swallow some little balls of nutritive essence, and refusing solid refreshment, go straightway for another fifteen miles

At Jubbulpore the capital of the Nerbudda territories, I again halted for a while conferring with the authorities Then I visited in a boat the far-famed Marble Rocks For about two miles the Nerbudda, narrowed by a gorge, flows through walls

of white marble cliffs The colour of the water is that deep emerald-blue which comes from extreme depth, and on that surface the sheen of the marble is reflected As we rowed up and down the stream the Native boatman told me that the river bore the name of Goddess If so, here she was, enshrined in the pure white temple of Nature I sketched the place by sunset and strove to depict, but with utter shortcoming, a scene which must, I supposed, be among the gems of landscape in the world

I concluded my tour by visiting the lake of Saugor with its decorated State barges, and thence proceeded westwards, past a long chain of artificial lakes which combined beauty with utility for irrigation The sight of these did indeed greatly raise my estimate of Native skill Thus I reached Gwalior, and beheld the citadel-rock rising abruptly out of the plain, and looking like the back of a prehistoric creature of preternatural dimensions I there recognised the several styles of architecture which connect this rock with the history of the ages

I then had to report my proceedings to Lord Canning, and learning that His Lordship was in camp near Allahabad, I seized the chance of obtaining a glimpse at Lucknow Crossing the pontoon bridge of the Goomti, I saw a long line of domes, cupolas, towers, minarets, stretching along the river-bank, and at the end the Bailey Guard with the

Residency, the scenes of British heroism and endurance during the recent war of the Mutinies

This tour abundantly rich for me in knowledge of India at large, and in imperial experience—was fruitful also in official results By the end of this year 1861 I had submitted to Lord Canning many Reports on grave affairs financial, political, military His Lordship expressed satisfaction with my Reports, because they embodied large recommendations, not only without provoking controversy, but with the declared concurrence of the local authorities concerned He seemed pleased because I, as his delegate in affairs often delicate, had induced others to agree with me But my own position was as yet unimproved, and some of my critics jocosely said that I had been making kingship for others but had not been able to make myself a king

I then, in the beginning of 1862 returned to Mr Laing's side at Calcutta and resumed financial duty I asked him whether, in the event of my having a choice, it would be better for me to take high administrative employ or to remain on the staff of the Government of India He advised me to adopt the line of active administration, remarking that the heroics of Indian finance were over He would be shortly returning to England, and I might be once more in the air, without any position in the Civil Service Lord Canning soon returned to Calcutta, in order to

prepare for his own departure from India He was in deep mourning as a widower, since the unlooked for death of Lady Canning, his countenance and mien bore the marks of grief which the exigencies of public life could not suppress Though I said not a word, I could not help feeling anxious as to whether he would make some provision for me before he went The Chief Commissionership of the Central Provinces had been already given to Colonel Elliot But he was about to go to England on two years' leave, and other high appointments were vacant, especially some on the Staff of the Government of India I was in suspense, for I feared being retained with the Government of India, yet I hoped to be sent far afield on active employ I well recollect one afternoon in March receiving a very friendly letter from Mr Lewin Bowring, Lord Canning's Private Secretary, saying that I was to act as Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, with congratulations regarding the field which would be open for my energies in this new administration Thus, for the present at least, my fate was settled

As the day for Lord Canning's departure drew nigh, the European community of Calcutta presented to him a farewell address They had, indeed, attacked him excessively during the course of the Mutinies But considering the victory that had been won, they would speak the last word in generosity and in

kindness I attended together with the deputation to present the Address, and watched his demeanour as he received it His lip slightly trembled as he said that, whatever faults might have been found in him, he had done his best for them as for all others I saw the succeeding Governor-General, the Earl of Elgin, sworn in at Government House He looked the very picture of health and hope, while the coming event of early and untimely death cast no shadow before him

Before my own departure from Calcutta, the European society of Calcutta were so kind as to give me an entertainment—this was the second honour of the kind I had, as yet, received during my career My old friend, Sir Robert Napier (afterwards Lord Napier of Magdâla) presided at the supper and made the speech in my honour I proceeded by rail to Allahabad, thence by horse-van to Jubbulpore Since I last travelled this way, two years before, the gaps in the railway communication between Calcutta and Allahabad had been filled up—and this fact was a sign of progress in the age On the way I was most kindly received at Serampore in Bengal by Dr George Smith who had then the charge of the "Friend of India," which still retained its importance as a public organ His conversation helped me to apprehend the bearing of non-official opinion upon official conduct

Arriving at Jubbulpore late at night I was awaked

the next morning by the sound of cannon fired as a salute for my new rank as Chief Commissioner This circumstance, happening to a man for the first time in his life, clings to the recollection I thought of the prediction of my Native friends on my departure from the Panjab I had, as they said would be the case, returned with the sound of artillery, yet the return was not to them but to another people

I was now, fourteen years after the beginning of my active service and just thirty-six years of age, in a governing position I was altogether beyond the ordinary line of the Civil Service in function, in power, in emolument, in prospect The circumstance was in those days somewhat extraordinary, and in these days would be still more so One of the first authorities at that time in Calcutta said that the great objection to my appointment lay in the fact of my being too young a man The reader may be curious to understand how all this came to pass, and to what causes I would myself attribute it

When I was, at the very outset, put to work in the Registration of Land tenures, I grasped its importance, stuck to it, and identified myself with it in the North-Western Provinces This caused me to be made a Settlement officer in the Panjab Next, the Settlement work imparted that special knowledge of the people and the country which enabled me to win the esteem of Mr John Lawrence and Mr

Montgomery In consequence of that I was entrusted with the preparation of the First Panjab Report, which was the foundation of my official fortunes That, again, led to my being appointed Secretary to the Panjab Administration, which was the first important appointment held by me, and it took me out of the ordinary line of the Civil Service But some few years later I left that Secretariat deliberately, in order to re-enter the ordinary line in its higher branches, and to display again the spurs I had previously won in that line I often congratulated myself afterwards in having taken that step, because it completed my qualification for a governing position It was the financial knowledge, gained in the Settlement and the Secretariat, that rendered me so lucky as to attract the favour of Mr James Wilson, who at once brought me on to the path which led up to the Central Provinces In all this I ever tried to do my best for the Natives I had to perform my duty both to them and to my employer the State That indeed did sometimes mean the performance of unpleasant tasks Otherwise I worked hard to help them onwards both mentally and materially, and they knew it My superiors, too, felt that, indeed Sir Robert Montgomery himself told me that he was much impressed in this respect Probably Lord Canning, when he travelled in the Panjab, may have received a similar impression Perhaps that was the reason why he

decided to place me in charge of a people rather than at the head of a Secretariat I had wished to make friends, and I made them Munn and Frere, Thornton and Barnes, Lawrence and Montgomery, Napier and Bruce, all helped me Two of my best patrons Mr Thomason and Mr Wilson died before their good intentions towards me could be carried out I had desired to avoid making enemies Critics and assailants I must necessarily have without number, but they need not be my enemies personally If I showed temper and resentment, they might indeed become hostile But if I did the reverse of this, then without abating their public opposition, they might entertain a private regard for me I strove to enter into the views and feelings of those with whom I had to deal in my various deputations, delegations and commissions Thus I was able to maintain agreement with them, and my succeeding in this was probably the final reason that determined Lord Canning to confer on me this great promotion

CHAPTER VIII

(1862–7)—THE CENTRAL PROVINCES

My position as Chief Commissioner — Equestrian arrangements — Disbandment of the Nagpore Irregular Force—Forming and consolidating of the new administration—Expedition down the river Godavery—First Report on the Central Provinces—Winter tour—My speeches to the landed classes—Wild animals — Expedition down the river Mahanadi — I give over charge to Colonel Elliot at Nagpore—My visit to Sir John Lawrence at Calcutta—I resume charge of the Central Provinces—Death of Colonel Elliot—Completion of the railway to Nagpore—Death of Mr Hislop—I visit Bombay—Take short leave to England—Exhibitions at Nagpore and Jubbulpore—Tour in Nimar—I leave the Central Provinces and proceed to the Deccan

AT Jubbulpore the curtain rose on a new scene of my drama with graceful effect The Civil officers entertained me at a water-picnic by moonlight amid the Marble Rocks of the river Nerbudda This veritable gem of Nature had previously been seen by me in the gold and red of sunset I now beheld the marble cliffs in a light even paler than themselves, and with their pallor reflected on the dark waters

I was now as regards responsibility Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces in the fullest sense Several territories, heretofore distinct, were to be fused and welded into one Administration In other words, several mechanisms were to be taken to pieces

and put together in one large machine All this afforded scope for origination and individuality But though I was to bear the brunt, the burden and the heat, there was a weak point in my position I had been gazetted as "Officiating"—which meant that I might after two years be displaced by Colonel Elliot the officer who held the substantive appointment I reckoned, however, that my work and conduct would be such that the Governor-General, Lord Elgin, would be induced either to arrange that I should not be displaced after two years, or to provide for me elsewhere I was soon joined by my cousin Mr Harry Rivett-Carnac—now Colonel and Aide-de-Camp to the Queen As confidant in all my public cares and companion in all my marches, he rendered me invaluable aid, until the Government of India, recognising his merit, took him for service under themselves He thus became Commissioner for Cotton and for commerce generally In that capacity he rendered great service when the cotton-fields of India were suddenly required, in consequence of the American Civil War, to supply much of the fibre for English manufactures His work under me in the Bengal Famine will be mentioned hereafter His subsequent employment as Opium Agent gave him opportunity of rendering marked service in the Volunteer cause His successor on my Staff was Captain Blomfield, who became my faithful companion on many a hard march

In an area of eighty thousand square miles, largely consisting of hills and forests, with about ten millions of people, I depended partly on my riding for administrative success Moreover I had a notion that it enhances the respect which the Natives have for our power, if the chief British officer in their sight handles a horse as if to the manner born and sits as if the saddle were his home I possessed a capital set of saddle horses six in number, and they deserve mention from me because I publicly alluded to the gallant and enduring creatures that had carried me through the hard and rough stages Of the six horses, four were pure Arabian, sons of the desert, the fifth was of mixed Indian breed, the sixth was of a Persian race I had also three harness horses all Australians

Before the hot weather should set in, I had just time to visit the Sautpura range of mountains, which ran right athwart the centre of my jurisdiction I wished to discover a sanitarium where sick Europeans might recruit their strength, as the Himalayas were much too distant I was in the lightest marching order, my camp furniture was of the scantiest, and I dispensed with bedsteads[1] My sheet and blanket were nightly spread either on dry leaves or withered grass, which furnished the softest bedding to my weary limbs The researches ended in the establishment of a health-resort at Puchmurri, a magnificent sandstone mass rising from out the midst of plutonic

formations I sketched the walls and bastions in this citadel of Nature At the base of one of the precipices was a great pool, delicious in the hot weather for swimming One evening a bearer of despatches rode hastily up and asked for the Chief Commissioner The escort pointed to me in the middle of this sheet of water, with two other officers, floating about with nothing save our noses above water

During this excursion I acquainted myself with the Gonds an aboriginal tribe, the first owners and rulers of these Sautpura mountains and of the country at their southern base, before invaders came, first Moslem, then Mahratta Considering that these Gonds had only a primitive culture and no written language, I admired their rugged fortresses, their rude though picturesque palaces, and more particularly their works of irrigation, literally scores of lake-like reservoirs on well chosen sites This work of theirs was the finest instance I had ever seen of mother-wit and practical cleverness unaided by science They could not bear any banishment from their native mountains, if one of them after a criminal trial were sentenced to imprisonment, he could not be confined anywhere in the plains, lest he should languish and die

When the hot winds began to blow I was glad to enter my spacious and comfortable home at Nagpore called the Residency, at the foot of the black rock crowned with the citadel of Sitabuldee The Nagpore

Irregular Force, of Natives, was to be disbanded Before leaving Calcutta I had promised to dispense with it at once I now found that the promise was more easily made than performed, for the men evinced a temper to resist disbandment This was an awkward circumstance, inasmuch as they were, as guards, in charge of the Civil Stations and the Treasuries in the interior of the Nagpore Province There were however regular troops of the Madras Army at Kamptee near Nagpore So I arranged with the Military authorities that the men of the Nagpore Irregular Force should at their several Stations be relieved by Madras Sepoys and then be ordered to march to Nagpore their headquarters So far they obeyed the order, with audible grumbling indeed, but without overt resistance There remained the anxiety of dealing with them on their arrival at Nagpore They were paraded in the ground immediately under the guns of Sitabuldee—a contingent of regular troops, Europeans, was on the spot They were then suddenly ordered to pile their arms, which happily, they did, doubtless perceiving that resistance was hopeless They were then disbanded under the liberal conditions which the Government allowed This done, the Police Force was reorganised and settled with the help of Colonel Herbert Bruce, who had been my colleague in Burmah

We then sighed for the monsoon or rainy season—as the Natives said, King Rain riding on his elephant

of cloud Attached to the Residency was a swimming-bath, in which I used to swim round and round for half an hour before breakfast and again before dinner—never before or since have I ever known such a luxury as this under my own roof There was a large European society at Nagpore, and I saw very much of it Heretofore in my career, I had entertained my friends at my own will in my private capacity Now I entertained guests in a public capacity, according to the obligations of my position These conditions lasted during nearly all the rest of my service in India About this time I was joined by my young brother John from England He was serving in a European regiment, but he entered the Bengal Staff Corps, and ran a successful career in the Civil Service of these Provinces

My new Administration had to proceed apace Churches were being built, the municipal improvements of the Nagpore city were begun, the summer-houses and tanks of the late Mahratta dynasty were restored for the public benefit, education was being organised, the Settlement of the land revenue had been previously undertaken but had now to be pushed on according to the plan which I had learned in Northern India, and the public works mainly trunk roads had to be planned for the ensuing season. It was a red-letter day when Bishop Cotton, my old Rugby master, came to open the new church at Nagpore In his speech to the assembled company he alluded to our Rugbeian days

Far from the mind of the listeners was the anticipation that ere long his earthly life was to sink in the current of the Ganges My Secretaries were at first Major Hector Mackenzie, whose services I had been fortunate in obtaining from the Panjab, and afterwards Mr (now Sir Charles) Bernard a nephew of Sir John Lawrence Owing to my frequent absence from headquarters, more than ordinary responsibility fell on them, and I remember with gratitude the skill and discretion with which they conducted affairs for me

When the rains had poured down and the rivers were in flood, I had to undertake an enterprise of some moment, namely to descend and then reascend the river Godavery from the confines of Nagpore to the Madras coast, facing the Bay of Bengal A project was then in progress for rendering this great river navigable, and I had to report to the Government of India thereon In order to reach the steamer that was to convey me, I had to cross some forest-clad hills I became belated in the dark forest, with a rain-storm coming down in a volume of water To be lost among those woods in such a night as that meant certain fever on the morrow However, one of my escort, a Mahratta of noble birth, whispered in my ear, amidst the splash of the rain, to ride on, for he was familiar with the path, and would guide me to a place of shelter I then understood the horsemanship for which the Mahrattas have ever been famed When

we met our steamer, under the direction of Colonel Haig, the chief engineer of the navigation project, we steamed down a long reach of the river, till we gained a barrier of obstructing rocks Then we saw the sites where the docks and the canal would be made for overcoming the impediment There we were met by another steamer, which carried us down a second reach of the river to a second barrier, with similar works in design, and so forth till we reached a third barrier Thus we came to a long range of hills which the river pierces, with its swollen streams circling in whirlpools between lofty and wooded banks Here my jurisdiction ended, but having got so far, it was well that I should proceed further and see the magnificent works of irrigation completed under the Madras Government in the delta of the river Having recently met at Madras Sir Arthur Cotton the originator of these projects, I rejoiced to see here the fruit of his commanding genius Then with Colonel Haig's aid we reascended the river, and returned to Nagpore where our friends were rejoiced to see us unscathed, inasmuch as there were many adverse chances attending such a journey as this at that season

After this episode I caught up the threads of the Administration in all its parts. I had now seen enough of the country to justify my undertaking the preparation of the First Report of the Central Provinces. For the Nagpore territories such a Report had long been

required by the Government of India, but had never been furnished I therefore seized the opportunity not only of fulfilling this requirement, but also of combining with it an account of the Nerbudda territories, regarding which no general Report had ever been made To all this I added an outline of the new Administration The presentation of this ample Report, within six months after my assuming charge of the country, was sure to strengthen my position and to augment my power for usefulness The Report itself received strong commendation from the Governor-General in Council

The autumn was now advanced and I resumed my camp life as soon as the malaria, consequent on the rainy season, had been dissipated The country, I found, had some fertile plains and one long valley, that of the river Nerbudda Otherwise it consisted of mountain and undulation, of forest and thicket, of spring and stream, of boulder and ravine Every one of the many rivers pursued its course over ledges or inclines of rock, causing cascades or rapids As we set out in the morning having drunk the water of one river, we thought of drinking before nightfall the water of some other well-known stream Added to all this were the remains of several dynasties Thus the inducements and the opportunities for sketching were alike endless The pursuit, too, fitted in exactly with my administrative work Thus my water-colour style, such as it was, became matured.

As their name indicated, the Central Provinces lay in the middle of India between the main divisions of the Empire, and contained several nationalities with several languages, though the Hindustani was a *lingua franca* generally understood One day I looked down from a height upon a fair held on a sandy plateau over against the river Nerbudda Quite a little sea of low tents was spread beneath the eye Entering the fair itself, I found long streets of canvas crossing each other at right angles, and bazaars thronged with multitudes in many-coloured costumes Another day I saw an encampment of gipsies, who plied a vast business as carriers with pack-bullocks across our mountains They laagered their impedimenta round a square flanked by rock and forest Inside the square were their women and children, their lares and penates, their beasts of burden on which their livelihood depended Outside the square were their picked men, keeping watch and ward against plunderers and wild beasts After sundown the scene was lighted up by the ruddy glare of their watch-fires They would tell me mournfully that, with my new roads under construction, their occupation would soon be gone Again, I attended village festivals, when the plough-bullocks were gaily caparisoned, their flanks being smeared with pigments and their horns bedecked with tinsel Anon, I was present at the feasts of the upper classes, when the balconies were radiant with illuminations, and the

outline of the tanks was marked by rows of lamps More particularly I joined the Mahratta chieftains when hunting with the cheeta, a sort of leopard The creature blindfold would be lying in a covered cart, and so carried towards the unsuspecting herd of deer The cart would stop, and the bandage being removed from his eyes, the cheeta would descry the buck, and instantly spring after him with wondrous bounds

The land tenure differed from the tenures in other parts of India There were Village Proprietors, each of whom owned his village or parish With them was the thirty years Settlement being made As these men understood Hindustani, I occasionally collected numbers of them together in the largest of my double-poled tents, and delivered speeches to them in that language on the merits of the Settlement, and on their duties under it With this view I had acquired the requisite fluency in Oriental speech

The population, though large on the whole, was sparse for the vast area My desire was to extend cultivation and habitation, but the obstacle was the prevalence of wild beasts Those villagers who ventured to set up their hamlets near the forest's edge, would find that their cattle were preyed upon by tigers, that boars and bears feasted and revelled in their crops, that wolves carried off their children Almost all my officers were good shots, and were constantly appealed to by the suffering villagers Further, I instituted a

system of rewards, so much a head for each kind of wild beast This stimulated the Native hunters, and the heads of these animals in great numbers were given in at the various police stations All this was done, indeed, for the benefit of humanity Still, on a retrospect, I cannot repress a certain qualm of compunction at the inroads made upon the animal kingdom The creatures were sometimes audacious and familiar One day while I was sketching, cries of anguish from my Native servants, the cup-bearer and the groom, aroused me to the fact that a bear had just introduced himself to them So I had to put down my sketching-block and take up my rifle to shoot the intruder As a marriage procession was passing by the thicket, a man-eating tiger sprang forth and seized one of the bridesmaids On my line of march one of the transport men was similarly carried off The panther was by far the most formidable of all beasts to hunt A man-eater of that species was known to be prowling about my camp, therefore, well-baited traps were set and he was caught before doing any damage A man-eating tiger one morning carried off a lad on my establishment, and was traced to a certain thicket I posted good shots on elephants round the thicket, entered it myself on my own elephant right up to the bloody corpse of the victim, and reckoned that if I missed the tiger he would be shot by my friends outside But no, with that intensified cunning which man-eaters have, he stole

away by one or other of the ravines round about and eluded us all

Though the whole region was one happy hunting ground for the pursuit of big game in all its grand varieties, I had no leisure, owing to my public duties and to my sketching, for systematic sport But I saw much of sport incidentally, thus becoming familiar with the haunts and habits of the creatures, also with the organisation needful for hunting Although the habitat of the elephant was not with us, yet we had a wild herd of these animals, the descendants of some Commissariat elephants that had escaped from captivity These we caught by the erection of a vast barrier in the shape of the letter V They were driven by the beaters into the broad end and so were pressed on to the fatal corner, where they were captured, but only after the very stiffest resistance

The forests were essential to the prosperity of the country, but yet were in danger of immediate injury and of ultimate annihilation from the onward movement of the people So it was among my first cares to organise a department of Forest Conservancy, ramifying all over the Provinces, with Colonel Pearson at its head This I did with the skilled advice of Dr (afterwards Sir Dietrich) Brandis, then Inspector-General under the Government of India

As the cold weather ended and the spring was ushered in, I closed my touring by an expedition down

the river Mahanadi I had already recommended in detail a light railway from Nagpore eastwards to the Mahanadi region, along the very line that has in these latter days been taken up by the railway that runs straight from Bombay to Calcutta I would see whether this river, with its mountainous banks, could be made navigable to the Orissa country facing the Bay of Bengal I accordingly went down the stream in country boats, observing the obstructions to permanent navigation, and proceeding as far as Cuttack, which was just beyond my jurisdiction On my return journey I had to ride with mounted guides through a long forest at night My way was, on this occasion, dangerously lighted up by fire For a while I admired the sight, as the flames licked up the brushwood and charred the trees But it soon became apparent that with flames behind us and on both sides, right and left, we must keep a dark and free place in front so as not to be enveloped Fortunately the guides understood the crisis, the bridle road was well defined, and my swift horse carried me through

Returning to my headquarters at Nagpore, I had several months before me wherein to complete at least the framework of my Administration Every improvement which I had learned in the North-Western Provinces and in the Panjab, under Thomason and the Lawrences and Montgomery, was introduced here Besides that, many other improvements requisite for the

peculiar conditions of this region were here founded by me

Thus the autumn passed, and Christmas was approaching when Colonel Elliot would be entitled to return from England and displace me Meanwhile the Administration of the Central Provinces had attracted public comment and had been dubbed "Temple's Raj," the word "Raj" having a double meaning of kingdom and personal rule I had several times received commendation from the Governor-General Lord Elgin I had been told demi-officially, by those in and about the Government of India, that the expectation formed regarding me had been answered Yet I did not hear of any arrangement being made to prevent my being displaced here, nor of any post being provided for me elsewhere My uncertainty was aggravated by the sad death of Lord Elgin after a short illness My relations with Colonel Elliot were most friendly, and I quietly awaited his return The night before his arrival I sent out from the Residency at Nagpore, an escort to meet him, which was my last official act before going to bed Awaking early in the morning, I heard the bearers set down his palanquin in the front porch I listened as he walked upstairs to his room Then I knew that I was only a private person That day and the next, I scarcely noticed the change in my position, being surrounded by visitors A farewell banquet was given to me by the Civil officers of the Nagpore Province The entertainment

took place in one of the Mahratta summer-houses of which I had caused the restoration The chairman was Mr (now Sir John) Strachey, who made a speech with a hearty friendliness which I shall never forget The company included many Military officers also The next day I left Nagpore, but halted for a short time at the neighbouring cantonment of Kamptee to receive a farewell entertainment from the officers of the Madras troops stationed there, and commanded by my friend General Shubrick

At this juncture I learned that my old Chief Sir John Lawrence was immediately coming out as Governor-General I then decided to proceed straightway to Calcutta and settle my future movements there, whether to proceed on furlough to England, or to continue service in India provided that a suitable position could be found I expected there to renew my old acquaintance with Sir Charles Trevelyan—now Financial Member of the Government—in whom I should have an excellent friend at Court On my way I received a cordial invitation from Sir John Lawrence to stay at Government House When I arrived there he asked me whether I had any reason for returning to England The answer was that I had none, but that I might find that there was no other alternative, as I had lost my post in the Central Provinces under the operation of the rules of the service, and as no similar post had been offered me by the Government He most kindly suggested that I should

stay with him for a few days, and see what might happen One day he informed me that he had laid before his Council the question whether it was desirable in the public interest for me to be invited to return to the Central Provinces, that they unanimously said it was, that accordingly he had arranged to transfer Colonel Elliot to a post of equal value elsewhere, and that I was to resume the position I had recently been occupying

I then returned to the Central Provinces which Colonel Elliot had in the meanwhile left on proceeding to his new post in Rajputana After a long journey I rode for the last five miles into Nagpore This ride was, through the kindness of my friends European and Native, quite like a triumphal procession, and I remember its being so described by the newspapers of the day There was still much of pomp and circumstance among the magnates of Nagpore, and they accorded me a stately reception Shortly afterwards I was on the death of Colonel Elliot confirmed substantively as Chief Commissioner On his death-bed he dictated a touching farewell to me which was transmitted by telegraph, and further messages full of kindness came to me by post He was an excellent man, he shone as an accomplished and industrious officer, and for many years he overtaxed his strength in the performance of duty, till exhaustion set in

My Administration now went on exactly from the

point where I had left it a short time before For the supervising of the Thirty years' Settlement I had been fortunate in obtaining from the Panjab the valued assistance of Mr (now Sir John) Morris, one of my earliest friends, who had served with me in the Settlement of that Province For the Courts of Justice and for Education I was resolved that the language should be the Mahratta in the Nagpore districts, in accordance with the nationality of the people there Through the help of my old friend Sir Bartle Frere, then Governor of Bombay, I obtained many Mahratta officials and teachers from that Presidency

In all educational matters I received the best advice from the Reverend Stephen Hislop, a distinguished missionary of the Free Church of Scotland at Nagpore His untimely death through an accident in my own camp, was deplored by me especially—*multis ille flebilis obiit, nulli flebilior quam mihi* The fatal mishap occurred in this wise at a place about twenty miles from Nagpore We had ridden out together in the morning, he being mounted on one of my horses, to witness the excavation of some prehistoric remains We crossed on our way a stream nearly dry between high banks He supervised the delving and the exhuming all day, while I attended to public business In the evening we started together, again on horseback, on our return to camp But he stopped on the way to examine a village school, and I rode on alone Arrived

at the crossing of the stream, I found it swollen by rain which had fallen during the day So I preferred to cross at a short distance lower down But I sent a man back to Mr Hislop to say that I had passed well by the lower crossing, and to recommend that he should do the same Whether this message was properly understood by him we could never learn. Soon afterwards when we had sat down to dinner in camp expecting his early arrival, the horse came galloping up riderless, and the wet saddle showed that the animal had been swimming Instantly a search-party was sent to the crossing of the stream, in the bed of which the dead body was found Evidently he must have fallen off the horse in attempting to cross Alas! what light and learning, what spark and flame of hope, were extinguished in his grave

During that summer all men were eagerly looking forward to the completion of the railway from Bombay to Nagpore Delay was occurring from insufficiency of local transport for the conveyance of the rails, the sleepers, and other material I thought that the want might be supplied from the Central Provinces, and I obtained the permission of the Governor-General to visit Bombay and arrange this matter So I journeyed from Bombay to Poona, and had a joyous meeting with Sir Bartle and Lady Frere I visited Bombay then on the pinnacle of its prosperity, and in the throes of its speculations, owing to the American Civil War Even

then I felt fears as to the stability of such sudden wealth as this As I stood on the heights of Matheran and watched the distant promontory of Bombay extending into the sea, a Bombay officer said how in that promontory endless heaps of rupees were accumulated I rejoined—"Yes—but how long will they remain there?" On a State occasion when some honours were being awarded to Natives of distinction, Sir Bartle Frere, looking towards me and others, said—"There are those who say that the prosperity of Bombay cannot last, well, that may be so, but while it does last, let it be used for purposes of benevolence and enlightenment"

I returned to my Central Provinces, and in due course the railway was completed to Nagpore As the first iron horse halted under the citadel rock, amidst a concourse of wonder-stricken natives, a feast was held by the Europeans in a long tent, and I had the honour to propose the toast of the Great Indian Peninsular Railway Company. Among its servants then present, my friend Mr Brereton was conspicuous About that time I had to perform the ceremony of laying the first stone of the terminal station The stone, a massive piece of trap, through the snapping of the ropes, fell just before my face, and I narrowly escaped an accident My uniform was splashed with lime, and I looked, as the critics remarked, like a veritable mason

Among the late Mr. Hislop's papers were found

distance After the interchange of cordial greetings, we fell to moralising sympathetically. He said that his imperial troubles were nearly over, but that mine were all before me! This was in allusion to his final departure from India at the close of the current year Lady Lawrence was at this time with him, and their daughters, I rejoiced specially in her society, as she had been my constant friend since the beginning of my Panjab days

The Executive, or Supreme Council, as distinguished from the Legislative Council, of the Governor-General, worked in India very much as a Cabinet works in England Each Member had his own Department of the Government, but all of us Members had to read the most important of the papers belonging to every Department We all, too, looked up to the Governor-General as our head I soon ascertained the main points of policy in which I could be of use to him in the closing months of his career in India These were—the preliminary steps with a view to the introduction of a gold standard into India—the development of Mr Massey's Licence Tax into an Income Tax—the passing of a Panjab Tenancy Bill through the Legislative Council—the elaboration of the policy respecting Afghanistan The two first of these pertained to my own Department, the third related to my old experience in the Panjab, the fourth flowed naturally from my recent experience in the Foreign Office

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I was disappointed, however, at finding myself unwell, owing to the change of climate in the mountainous health resort, after all that I had endured in the plains for several years I then resolved that in the following year, after my first Budget, I would revisit England for a brief while In the meantime I was fully able to study, to calculate, to ride and to sketch In art-work I found, indeed, congenial spirits There was a galaxy of amateur talent in water-colour painting then at Simla Who that beheld them can forget the productions of Colonel Walter Fane, of Colonel (now Sir Michael) Biddulph, of Major (now Sir Peter) Lumsden, of Colonel Strutt, or Major Baigree, of Captain Strahan, of Colonel (now Sir Richard) Sankey? Besides these, Mr (now Sir Donald) Macnabb was a charming companion of mine during rides among the mountains With Michael Biddulph I formed an artistic friendship of the closest kind Together we bore hunger and fatigue in the pursuit of natural beauty We perched ourselves on the edges of precipices in order to grasp mentally the most striking objects Rising from our camp-beds before dawn on mountain summits we sat by bonfires and watched the first streaks of day behind snowy peaks of classic and historic celebrity, the glacier sources of the Ganges and the Jamna One evening after nightfall, while ambling quickly through the thicket towards the hospitable abode of a Native chief,

we and our ponies were startled and dazzled by the sudden apparition of torches borne by servitors who had come to meet us I painted views of Simla for an amateur Exhibition which he was then organising, these being the first works I had ever exhibited From the top of Mount Jacko, which rises up in the midst of Simla, I studied the prospect which is perhaps the most characteristic in all India From an altitude of over eight thousand feet (above sea-level) the eye ran over the ridges of several hill-ranges, till it rested on the great plain some seventy miles distant This plain stretched southwards indefinitely like an ocean, its horizon being bounded only by the sunset sky Through it the river Satlej was seen winding in the rainy season with full flood, like a mighty serpent I reflected that on the banks of that river the march of Alexander, which had extended all the way from Macedon, was stopped at last—that there the recent victories over the Sikhs had been won by the British —that this classic stream, after many engineering trials, had at length been spanned by a railway viaduct several miles in length

Simla itself was as a city set on a hill, or rather on the ridge of an elevated saddle between two hills of which the chief was Jacko No sheep's back was ever more clothed with wool than this dome-shaped mountain was with forest A spectator might clamber up its fern-clad sides, look through the openings like

windows in the foliage of oak, ilex, spruce or cedar, and behold Simla far below his feet, almost as if suspended in the air between the mountains The most fashionable of the thoroughfares ran through a vast cedar-grove In the rainy season when the mist lay thick among the trees, they seemed like the ghosts of departed cedars The houses and villas of the Europeans bore some resemblance to Swiss dwellings Peterhof the Governor-General's residence was then a house of this description, though it may since have assumed a palatial form As there were no wheeled vehicles, the ladies went about in Sedan chairs with bearers in livery and of Himalayan race The gentlemen rode ponies of Himalayan breed, sure-footed creatures to whom many of us owed our safety on divers occasions Thus we went to the social gatherings in the rainy season, enveloped in waterproof clothing Sometimes I watched the Council of the Governor-General assemble for its weekly meeting at Peterhof on a wet forenoon In the spacious verandah would be standing the messengers with red garments cut in Oriental fashion and white turbans Presently a figure swathed in macintosh would come up, mounted on an ambling pony, with a groom wrapped in a blanket running alongside The gentleman would be received with profound obeisance, being a Member of Council Anon another, and yet another, would similarly arrive in the pelting rain I thought that this was a strange manner of assembling

for a knot of men who had supreme authority over two hundred and fifty millions of people Still, despite peculiarities incidental to altitude and climate, Simla was quite worthy of its queenlike station The rains ceased, the sun broke through the clouds round about us, the snowy range stood out clear against the whole northern horizon, and the autumn set in as the bloom of the whole year ' Then I used to accompany Sir John Lawrence in his quiet rides as he would take his last looks at the wondrous scenery We talked over all we had seen and done together during the last seventeen years He said that my day had come at last, and advised me how I should comport myself in the trials that might be before me More particularly he commended to me the financial policy I should aim at after his departure

When we departed from Simla in the beginning of November, I paid a visit to Sir Seymour Fitzgerald the Governor of Bombay In these days I made the valued acquaintance of his Private Secretary, my friend Mr (afterwards Sir Gerald Seymour) Fitzgerald, now political Aide-de-Camp at the India Office Then I returned to Calcutta and took up my abode in Dalhousie Square The verandah of my palatial apartments was the finest I have ever occupied, which is much to say I filled it with Oriental plants and shrubs in groups which were arranged for artistic effect Such a collection of plants would have exhausted an ordinary fortune in England,

but these I was able to gather together with but little more than the cost of collecting During the short remainder of the year (1868) I was busy in the Treasury, preparing calculations which proved the necessity of an Income Tax for the safety of Indian Finance, being anxious to obtain the imprimatur of Sir John Lawrence to these figures before submitting them to his successor

On the day of Lord Mayo's arrival in January 1869 —to assume the office of Governor-General—I went to Sir John Lawrence at his request, and found him in full uniform and decorations, devoutly thankful to have served out his time, but somewhat exhausted from the continuance of over-work With my colleagues in Council, I stood behind our veteran chief at the head of the great flight of steps that leads up to the front entrance of Government House We watched his handsome successor walk up these steps in morning dress with debonair aspect and gallant mien—followed by Lady Mayo None of us dreamt of the tragic circumstances under which his next ascent would be up these very steps three years later

From the beginning of 1869 I had earnestly to consider my forthcoming Budget, which hinged on the introduction, or rather the re-introduction, of the Income Tax In this respect I knew that the support of one of my colleagues, Sir John Strachey, could be depended upon I rejoiced to find that Lord Mayo was

prepared to accept Sir John Lawrence's policy in this matter, and he obtained the assent of the Executive Council generally In March the day came for my first Budget-statement to be made to the Legislative Council in the Great Hall of Government House I had prepared my elaborate exposition down to the last word The intention of the Government regarding the Income Tax was a secret well kept The outside public attended in very large numbers, indeed there had not been so considerable a concourse for several years My statement occupied two hours in delivery, and apparently everyone in the audience sat through it When it was over, I received many congratulations, instead of the reproaches which I had feared That was, indeed the bravest day that had as yet dawned on my career At first my Budget was received with less disfavour than I had expected There was no denying that without the Income Tax a deficit would be inevitable Even with the Tax I obtained only an equilibrium between income and expenditure, so moderate had my proposals been The next morning I scanned the newspapers, to see what index would be afforded of public opinion, and found less of surprise and dissatisfaction than I had anticipated I did not suffer myself, however, to be elated, knowing how soon the *popularis aura* had changed in the time of my master, Mr Wilson

Soon afterwards I journeyed with Lord Mayo and

my colleagues in Council, to Umbala, as the Amir of Caubul, Sheie Ali, was come theie to meet the Goveinoi-Geneial The Amii aiiived without retinue, pomp or ciicumstance I was present when he was received by Loid Mayo in Duibai assembly He did not possess the physical giandeur which often distinguishes Afghans Square-built, short in stature, with aquiline piofile and piercing eye, he looked what he was, a man who had fought his way by arms to his position and meant to stay there by the same means No goigeous ceiemonies weie held, foi we all felt that the business was grave There weie, indeed, some parades of tioops, but they were in "magnificently stein array"

The Government of India then took up its quarteis at Simla But I returned to Calcutta, to supervise the issue of the loan foi the Public Woiks of the year I believed that the terms, thus obtained by the Goveinment, would indicate the confidence of the money market in my Budget Being present at the opening of the tenders, I rejoiced at seeing the favourable offers made by many financial corpoiations

This over, I iesolved to proceed straightway to England, having already obtained leave by the rules of the Service, as my health needed some change of climate But further, the affairs in which I was now engaged would come under the immediate notice of the Secretary of State in London and of Pailiament Thus

I was concerned in understanding English opinion on these subjects I wished to meet English statesmen and financiers, to see what principles they would expect to be maintained, apart from anything that I might have learned in India So I proceeded by rapid railway journey to Simla to wish Lord Mayo good-bye, and to thank him for all his good support I then journeyed to Bombay, and embarked on the mail steamer for Suez

According to my previous practice, I tried to enlarge my knowledge of Europe while on my way from India to England Having reached Brindisi, I turned off to Naples and Pompei Thence I visited Rome, crossed the Alps by the Brenner pass to Inspruch, and so journeyed by Munich to England I arrived at my Worcestershire home just as the leafy month of June was opening, and I told my father that in all my long journeying the loveliest bit was in the last five miles Proceeding to London and finding a Liberal Ministry in office, I waited on Mr Gladstone then Prime Minister He was so good as to find time to explain to me the system of managing the National Debt, especially the manner of effecting conversions for the reduction of interest, as I contemplated making some attempts of this kind on my return to India Sir John Lawrence had given me an introduction to the Duke of Argyll the Secretary of State for India His Grace was so kind as to talk over my recent Budget

with me, and drove me with him to the House of Lords when he made a statement there on Indian finance On that occasion I heard one of the Noble Lords cite in debate the concluding passages of my Budget speech made at Calcutta I repeated in England what had been ofttimes said by me in India, to the effect that many wished to promote expenditure, while few only were willing to bear the consequent burden With an Income Tax at a low rate, I had just gained an equilibrium between income and expenditure, a condition easily disturbed by countless circumstances besetting Indian finance This condition was by no means sufficient, but it could not have been improved without augmenting the Income Tax rate, which augmentation could not be passed through either the Executive or the Legislative Council His Grace introduced me to Mr Goschen from whom I derived much instruction I renewed my acquaintance with Mr and Mrs. Robert Low I met repeatedly Sir John Shaw Lefevre and Mr (afterwards the Right Honourable George) Shaw Lefevre Through their kind offices I came to know Mr Bruce (afterwards Lord Aberdare) and Mr John Bright I deemed myself fortunate in having a long conversation with Lady Palmerston—widow of Lord Palmerston—as she seemed to take a friendly interest in the career of one who bore the name of Temple I had the benefit of literary intercourse with Lord Houghton in his house at Fryston My particular care

was to visit Sir Stafford Northcote, to whom indeed I owed my position He fully appreciated the difficulties under which I had produced the Budget, and seemed to think that I had gained as much as was practicable in the good cause of surplus, considering the obstacles against gaining more I had the pleasure of visiting him at the Pines near Exeter I received hospitality from Lord Fortescue at Castle Hill in Devonshire I resumed my old intercourse with Mr Dudley and Lady Camilla Fortescue Further, I had the honour of visiting Lord and Lady Salisbury at Hatfield, Lord and Lady Lawrence were in the house party on that occasion I specially conferred with my old friend Sir Thomas Erskine May, the Clerk of the House of Commons, and he introduced me to Mr Speaker Denison In all matters I derived much aid from Lord Hampton, formerly Sir John Pakington, my father's earliest friend I was favoured by an interview with Mr Disraeli Among many wise sayings, he said that the discipline of the House of Commons made men forbearing A disposition to forbear was, he thought, a great quality in the contests of life I saw Lord Lawrence sitting on the cross-benches in the House of Lords during the debate on the Second Reading of the Irish Church Bill In September Lord Northbrook was so kind as to invite me to Stratton

Nor was general culture overlooked, for I met persons of eminence outside politics On a visit to

Lord and Lady Portsmouth at Hurstbourne, I was in company with Charles Kingsley and talked with him upon social questions. During a sojourn at Homburg I saw much of George Grote and his wife. I used to show my collection of water-colours to Lord Stanhope (known as Lord Mahon the historian). I walked with Ward Hunt, the Conservative Ex-Minister in the forests of the Taunus mountains. More particularly I went to Wiesbaden to see Lord Clarendon, then Foreign Secretary. His Lordship questioned me anxiously about the countries of the Turkomans and the Afghans. I was thankful to note his clearness of vision and his patriotic tone.

While visiting the Duke of Argyll at Inveraray, I received unfavourable news from India regarding the progress of finance as the year wore on. I had a despatch from Lord Mayo enquiring whether I should be returning to India in time to help in carrying any additional measures of taxation that might become necessary within the year. I replied that my return in due time might be depended upon. After spending a few days with my father in Worcestershire I prepared for departure. I feared lest these would be the last days that he and I would ever spend together, and such proved to be the case.

Reaching Bombay at the end of October I travelled straight to Calcutta. I well remember immediately after my arrival at Calcutta how a note came from the

Private Secretary Colonel (afterwards Sir Owen) Burne, asking me to dine with Lord and Lady Mayo that evening After dinner, while the ladies and the Staff sat in one part of the drawing-room, Lord Mayo took me aside to another part He told me that since we last met several financial troubles had occurred—that for the current year the advices regarding opium were unfavourable and the Customs receipts showed some decline Thus the equilibrium in the Budget between income and expenditure was threatened with disturbance But he could not brook deficit in the first year of his incumbency This could be averted only by raising the rate of the Income Tax within the current year Was I prepared for the odium of proposing such augmentation of the Income Tax rate at once, as not a day was to be lost? I answered that I had already understood the Government to have made up its mind that something of this sort must be done, and that he could command my services to the utmost—as to the odium, I could bear that so long as I commanded his confidence I added that the public had apparently been prepared for some such measure, and that the Legislative Council must be meeting on an early date, when I would, if His Lordship and my Colleagues in Council approved, introduce a Bill to double the rate of the Income Tax for the second half of the year Accordingly at the hour appointed I appeared once more in the Great Hall of Government House The attendance, though not so bright as on the Budget

day, was yet considerable I briefly stated to the Legislative Council the figures which showed the necessity of my proposal I explained that with this proposal the equilibrium of the Budget would at least be maintained Indeed the danger of deficit had caused some patriotic alarm both inside and outside the Council So the increased Income Tax was passed for the nonce without difficulty Still there was dissatisfaction out of doors, which vented itself on the head of me the Finance Minister I patiently read all the adverse comments in the newspapers The idea seemed to be that I would not dare to do more than had been already done

During the early months of the ensuing year 1870, I was busy with the preparation of the coming Budget Yet I mixed much in general society, and one evening I had the great honour of entertaining the Duke of Edinburgh, during the time of His Royal Highness' visit to Calcutta The moment was, however, one of unpopularity for my Financial Department Still I tried to preserve a cheerful countenance before the world, and to show friendliness towards my opponents, so that there should be no personal unpopularity added to the dislike which might unavoidably attach to my public measures As the Budget day approached I formally submitted to the Governor-General and to the Executive Council a recommendation for an Income Tax of four per cent, that being the rate which my master Mr Wilson had actually proposed in 1860 As the figures

stood at that moment for the expenditure of the great spending departments, there was no alternative for averting deficit save the rate I proposed But though my recommendation was confidential, yet all men surmised that something grave was in contemplation, and then a spirit of retrenchment appeared So the demands for expenditure were reduced enough to enable me to present a small surplus with an Income Tax of three per cent only Once more I appeared in the Great Hall of Government House before the same audience as on the previous occasions But the people looked more anxious and less friendly than heretofore After an elaborate exposition from me, ending in the Income Tax proposals, the assemblage broke up in silence I felt that almost everyone was walking off to fulminate his indignation against me and my department In fact the Governor-General was, if possible more responsible than I, and each one of my colleagues in the Executive Council had a co-ordinate responsibility Nevertheless for this business, I was the fountain-head and the mouthpiece As public wrath must needs individualise some supposed offender, I was quite willing to bear the brunt I meant within a year or so to win such success as might cause all this disparagement to be forgotten It was pardonable for me to imagine that, by bearing the odium then, I should reap the more credit thereafter Still the adverse clamour continued, and private friends without number warned me of the disadvantage accruing

to myself personally A definite line had, however, been taken, and retrocession was for me impossible

I had yet another obnoxious measure to propose The cash balances in the numerous treasuries of the Indian Empire had been maintained at a comfortably high figure The Government's credit, as was usual after a strong Budget, had risen The political and military circumstances of Europe were promoting British industry, to the benefit of the Indian trade also It was "a psychological moment" for reducing the interest on a portion of the National Debt The intention of the Government was kept secret, up to the moment when the Gazette announced that the stockholders of certain loans would have their principal repaid unless they accepted a lower rate of interest It was added that the Paper Currency department, which under legal requirements held stock to a large amount, would surrender that, and receive a corresponding amount of stock at a lower rate of interest This measure had unavoidably the effect of reducing many incomes, both for individuals and for corporations The indignation already existing against my department was thus raised in many quarters to white heat The conversion of these loans, however, according to the terms set forth in the Gazette, proved to be a complete success, and a considerable benefit to my Budget

Fortunately my position in the Executive Council had improved Sir John Strachey had from the first

been a consistent supporter of the Income Tax But I had now two fresh allies in Lord Napier of Magdâla and Sir Barrow Ellis I shall ever remember their friendly support of me in my hour of trial I also received infinite assistance from the Chief Financial Secretary, Mr Robert Chapman, who had a remarkable skill and aptitude in framing forecasts from all available data

I had now been for some time at Simla, and the success of my Budget was being affirmed by the news from all quarters Yet I continued to be the best abused man in India, and nothing remained but to patiently live down the unpopularity, which was official only and not at all personal Among other circumstances, a newspaper republished some verses, a century or more old, criticising the historic Lord Cobham My blood being traced to that nobleman, his qualities were held to be reproduced in me I reflected, however, that English opinion may sometimes be hasty and unjust at first, but is generally reasonable and just in the end, and I hoped it would prove to be so in my case

Then I had comparative leisure for a few weeks after all the rough work I joined my colleagues in doing honour to our distinguished comrade, Sir Henry Durand, and I was participator in the banquet given to him by the Civil and Military officers of Lahore on his proceeding to assume the high office of Lieutenant-Governor of the Panjab Then I resumed my sketching to refresh my spirits I would ride round Mount

Jacko of a morning, and return home my eye and brain being saturated with beauty

Among the residents at Simla that year were Mr and Mrs Charles Lindsay and their two daughters, the elder of whom was Mary and the second Laura Mr Lindsay was nearly related to the Crawford branch of the Lindsay family He was an eminent member of the Civil Service, and a Judge in the Chief Court of the Panjab at Lahore My acquaintance with Mary Lindsay, once formed, grew apace We were engaged at Simla in the autumn, and were married at Lahore in January of the following year, 1871 The man who stood by me on that auspicious occasion was Mr (afterwards Sir Henry) Cunningham, who ran a career of distinction in the legislature and on the Judicial Bench My wife and I then journeyed to Calcutta, as a new Budget was in preparation To show how little the private sentiments of men are affected by disagreement in public affairs, a Calcutta journal which had been among my most strenuous opponents, published some pretty stanzas on the occasion, wishing me and the lady every happiness

Nevertheless the indignation against my financial policy, though subsiding, had not abated I understood that, on my re-appearing in my opera-box for the winter season, some men wondered how I dared thus to show my face after the unpopular taxes and other measures which had been introduced The disturbances in

Europe caused British business to thrive everywhere, and our finances throve with it So in the beginning of spring all men knew that the financial prospect would be such as to justify a reduction of the Income Tax Once more I appeared in the Great Hall of Government House, and this time the audience wore a friendly aspect After the delivery of my statement, a social reception immediately followed in the gardens of Government House I there received many smiling congratulations on what the company regarded as the improvement in my financial policy In the Legislative Council, during the debate which ensued on my Budget Bill, Lord Mayo defended me with an outspoken manliness that will ever live in my grateful recollection He said that I had not only borne the burden and heat of the day, but had endured much undeserved blame—and that I should find my reward in the success which was crowning my efforts As we sat down to lunch afterwards I thanked him for his kind speech, and he replied that every word of it was meant by him There was afterwards, however, so much trouble with the Legislative Council that, to my regret, the Government agreed to enact the tax for one year only, subject to re-enactment on proof of necessity

I then arranged to take my wife for a honeymoon trip during April, which the exigencies of the Budget had prevented our attempting sooner. She chose the

Vale of Cashmere, and with that view we journeyed to Jammu the capital of the Native State to which Cashmere belonged We there met the Minister Kirpa Ram, a Cashmere Brahmin, an attractive personality, and one of the most accomplished administrators of his day in India The Native Sovereign, an old friend of mine, most hospitably provided us with escort and conveyance suited for mountain paths I rode by my wife's sedan chair, and soon escaping from the hot valleys we ascended to delicious pasture grounds in the midst of forests Thence we beheld snowy ranges at varying distances, some near and some far Then we looked down on the loudly Chenab far beneath us, rushing with deep-blue water over his rocky bed as if struggling to emerge from the Himalayas and luxuriate in the plains Crossing this masterful current, we passed range after range of mountains where the winter snow, as yet unmelted, was lying deep, until we gained a final ascent This was the crest of the Banihâl Pass, right over the head of the Vale of Cashmere, and the source of the Jhelum Far away on a level with, or above, the eye were the icy and snowy gables, towers, pinnacles, of the mid-Himalayan range Near at hand, and beneath the eye, was a vast layer of vapour I knew that this was really a cloud-roof stretched over Cashmere Underneath it, deep below and invisible to us, was the famous landscape I stayed for a while to sketch, but my wife went on and was soon lost to sight

after penetrating the vapour Passing through it, she emerged upon the scenery of Cashmere Having descended to the valley, we glided in a State-barge down the Jhelum, underneath wooden foot-bridges of strange structure, past ruins and antiquarian remains, to the lake adjoining Srinagar the capital town We were wafted gently across this lake, musing over the poetry of Moore and his "Light of the Harem" Then we passed on to the Mogul palace, of which the poet had read, and where he placed the scene of "the feast of roses," the crowning episode of "Lalla Rookh" I had soon to proceed to Simla—returning viâ Jammu and Lahore—in order to join the Governor-General and my colleagues Later on, at the opening of the water-colour exhibition, Lord Mayo alluded to this Cashmere trip of mine with graceful humour, amusing the company with the inference that I had tempered the severity of my finance with this romantic episode

After the Executive Council had reassembled at Simla, I noticed more than once that Lord Mayo alluded to some plan whereby the financial powers of the several Provincial Governments might be enlarged with advantage Being myself in favour of the principle, I called by appointment on His Lordship, and inquired regarding the proposed plan He then explained to me verbally the plan which afterwards became known and acted upon as Provincial Finance I then and there agreed to reduce it all to writing,

and I submitted the same to our colleagues in Council, by whom it was accepted

Two incidents, while I was on horseback with Lord Mayo, may be here recorded One day near Simla we were riding along a sharply pointed ridge with a steep descent on either side I asked whether he would be surprised to hear that his pony was picking its way along the watershed of two oceans He said, "How so?" and I explained that every drop of rain-water that fell on one side mingled with the drainage of the Ganges, flowing into the Bay of Bengal, while every drop that fell on the other side mingled with that of the Indus, flowing into the Arabian Sea Another day at nightfall we were riding home across the Mydan Park at Calcutta All round the green expanse numberless lamplights were beginning to twinkle At a favourable moment I asked him whether I should do best to stay in the Executive Council, or to resume an administrative career He replied that an active career on my own undivided responsibility would be decidedly the best for me

I remained at Simla late that year until my son Charles was born Then I hastened to Calcutta, for again there was a recrudescence of the agitation against the Income Tax Many persons of influence went so far as to say that the improvement in trade and revenue was so great as to justify the remission of the tax altogether during the last quarter of the year Lord

Mayo was, however, good enough to say that he was unwilling to accept such a proposal unless I could be induced to agree I reiterated my previous arguments, and the reasons why the tax, though levied at a low rate, should be retained as an engine of finance In the early days of 1872, I understood that Lord Mayo was, with reference to these questions, on the point of postponing his trip to the Andaman Islands, for which arrangements had been made He so far reassured himself, however, that his start was made on the day already fixed Alas! none of us imagined that he was then marching to his doom

Shortly afterwards I was in the Treasury Chambers one afternoon, making my Budget calculations as usual, when a messenger brought a hastily written note from the senior Member of Council, Sir John Strachey, asking me to meet him at once I drove over to his house immediately, and he met me at the head of the staircase He said in a broken voice that Lord Mayo had been assassinated, that the telegram in cipher had been so far deciphered as to make this fact certain, but that the details were still being deciphered We stood together, and watched the tragic story being spelt out word by word Meanwhile three other Members of the Executive Council hurriedly came up, and among them Mr (afterwards Sir James) Fitzjames Stephen We held a meeting of the Executive Council then and there I was struck by the masterly manner

in which Mr Stephen advised us on this sudden crisis By the Act of Parliament, the Governor of Madras, Lord Napier of Ettrick, was Governor-General until some person should be appointed by the Crown But until Lord Napier should arrive at Calcutta, the senior Member of the Executive Council, Sir John Strachey, would act as Governor-General The requisite notifications were issued by us that same evening to every quarter of the Indian Empire It was essential to let the vast Native population see that the Imperial Executive was not suspended for an instant even by the sudden murder of its Chief The event, being of extreme gravity in itself, became still more grave from its occurrence not long after the assassination of Chief Justice Norman in Calcutta

I was in the front rank of those who stood on the bank of the Hooghly, when the coffin of Lord Mayo was transferred from the steamer to the landing place Sir John Strachey, my colleagues and I, headed on foot the procession, which included all the principal officers in Calcutta, and extended over a great length Thus we followed the coffin to the courtyard of Government House, and to the top of the great flight of steps I could not but recollect how the illustrious deceased had walked up this very flight of steps, just three years before, to assume his high office At the landing place we, the Members of the Executive Council, met Lady Mayo and her suite Together

with her we attended a funeral service which was said in front of the coffin, and in the very apartment where the meetings of the Council had been held It would be hard to picture a more touching and impressive scene

A short time afterwards I again stood with my colleagues at the head of the flight of steps to greet Lord Napier of Ettrick on his arrival as Governor-General *pro tempore* The ceremony naturally had a melancholy aspect, and Lord Napier himself said that he was come to a house of mourning

It was known that the new Governor-General, Lord Northbrook, would not arrive from England till the very end of April Therefore my forthcoming Budget would be brought out under the auspices of Lord Napier I found him quite ready to maintain the Income Tax at a low rate, if the tax were proved to be indispensable Otherwise, like many of the authorities then in India, he would be thankful to give it up As the time for settling the Budget drew near, I became anxious as to what his decision might be, as everything would depend on that in the then condition of the Executive Council I felt mental relief when he agreed to retain the tax for the financial year

Early in May we assembled for a joyous reception when Lord Northbrook came, accompanied by his daughter, Miss Baring—afterwards Lady Emma As he walked out of the Council Chamber after being sworn

in, I reminded him that our last meeting had been under his hospitable roof at Stratton I soon understood him to be of opinion that there were political objections to the Income Tax in India, and that the tax could be dispensed with in the then condition of surplus My own view regarding the continuance of the measure was unchanged, still when a Statesman of his financial knowledge held a contrary opinion, I doubted whether the tax could be maintained after the current year, 1872-3 I at once struck in, however, with my favourite note regarding surplus, and there I fell into complete accord with him I represented that the relinquishment of the Income Tax would be hard of justification unless a good surplus existed in the current year, and that after such relinquishment a continuous surplus ought to be provided in the immediate future, otherwise our credit would suffer Such surplus could be achieved only by resolute economy in expenditure He seemed fully to approve this view, and I assured him of my best co-operation in respect thereto I reminded him that the next Budget, for 1873-4, would be my fifth and last, as my term of five years in office would be then expiring

Sir James Fitzjames Stephen having retired, his place was filled by Mr Arthur Hobhouse, now Lord Hobhouse, who brought leading, light, and learning to our counsels

Ere this my eldest son, Richard, had visited me

more than once He had entered the Army and had joined a European regiment in India, preparatory to becoming a member of the Bengal Staff Corps—in order to run a civil and political career

I then began to make my last surveys of scenery at Simla The breaking up of the rainy season was in that year more glorious than ever As the pall, or curtain, of clouds was lifted up bit by bit, each interstice, like a window, displayed sunlit scenes beyond But further, the fragments and shreds of the cloud-veil assumed, in their dispersion, all the gorgeous colouring of sunlight playing upon vapour I made rapid sketches, sometimes almost instantaneous memoranda, of these fugitive effects My wife collected all my scraps and studies of clouds into a book, which was named "Cloudland"

In this autumn of 1872 I quite expected to retire from the Service, after just twenty-five years' work, and after holding for five years an office as high as any to which I had aspired I should then be but little over forty-five years of age, and might hope for some public career in England

But as the winter approached, I was one day informed by Lord Northbrook that it would be convenient to the Secretary of State, the Duke of Argyll, that I should retain my office for another year, from the spring of 1873 to that of 1874 This proposal was kindly supported by Lord Northbrook himself I accepted

the offer, in the belief that it would be regarded by public opinion as honourable to me, and as a proof that my financial policy, despite all attacks from the outside, had been approved by the authorities I well remember writing to my father, with some pardonable satisfaction, an explanation of my position

During the last part of this winter, I decided to visit Madras and Bombay on financial business, and to make a tour round the coast of the Indian Peninsula, my wife accompanying me We proceeded by rail to Bombay, and were there most hospitably received by the Governor, Sir Philip Wodehouse A banquet was given by the community to Lord Northbrook, who had just come from Sind I was there joined for a while by my second son, Henry, who had just arrived from England as an officer in the Army So we journeyed to Mahabaleshwar, the summer resort of the Bombay Government It was the birthplace of the Empire founded by the Mahrattas I ascended Pertabgurh, and saw the very spot where Sivaji, their national hero, assassinated the Moslem envoy, an event which, two centuries and a half ago, gave a fresh turn to the political life of India

Having returned to Bombay, I embarked with my wife on a coasting steamer bound for Goa The unfailing sunshine, the violet sea, the white-sailed country craft, the prettily outlined coast—made us feel that we were gliding past the sunny land From New Goa,

a cheerful place on the shore, we penetrated inland to Old Goa a distressful scene of desolation The city while in its grandeur was stricken with a deadly fever, and was consequently deserted The tropical vegetation with merciless luxuriance was encircling and smothering the fine architecture of the cathedral, of the archbishop's abode, of the vicegal palace, of the convents, of the palatial dwellings Thence we proceeded to Honore on the coast, and I left my wife on board the steamer while it stopped for its trading My object was to visit the Gairsoppa Falls, which were reckoned among the wonders of India I ascended the river by a boat in the afternoon, and then in a palanquin gained the top of a forest-clad hill about four o'clock in the morning I was there within earshot of the falls which, though invisible, were making their voices heard in an unearthly manner Two hours of darkness, in a delightful temperature, still remained But sleep was impossible, as the resonance of the great cascade had an ineffable melancholy It was as if the groans and shrieks of the damned were mingled in one dread chorus Dante ought to have heard it before writing his "Inferno" At dawn I stood on the point commanding a full view of the falls, but I could see naught save one thick veil of spray, behind which the water was rending the air with the voices of demons innumerable The sun soon lifted the veil, and I spent the whole day sketching the falls They had four branches, more

than eight hundred feet above the valley below, where their waters joined in one stream I had intended to spend the night there, believing that I had become familiar with the cataract's roar But finding my sleep to be perturbed thereby, I rose before midnight and travelled straight on till morning

Then we proceeded to the harbour of Beypore, left our steamer, and travelled up to Ootacamund in the mountains, the health-resort of the Madras Government There we obtained a striking view of the Blue Peak, Nîl Giri, which gives its name to the mountain-range, with the distant shimmer of the Indian Ocean behind the violet-grey summits We overlooked at sunrise the network of valleys, called the Wynaad It was suffused and saturated with clouds and mists—the hill-tops in every direction just rearing their heads, and seeming like islets amidst an ocean of vapour

Descending to the plains of Southern India, we visited the historic rock of Trichinopoly—the sacred colonnades of Madura with long vistas of columns, each column being a statue—the palace of Tirumul, one of the best structures of that kind ever raised by Native hands—the towering gateways of the Tanjore temples covered with sculpture—the sacred monolith granite Bull, quite a marvel Then we journeyed to Madras, and stayed with our friends Colonel the Honourable Edward Bourke and Mrs Bourke He was the brother, and had been the Military Secretary, of the late Lord Mayo

He was then Postmaster-General of the Madras Presidency We were received too by the Governor Lord Hobart and Lady Hobart in their country house at Guindy From Madras we took a coasting steamer to Masulipatam, the object being to visit the great dam of the river Kistna, some miles in length, which catches the waters as they emerge from the mountain range, so that they may be utilised for irrigation We reached Calcutta before New Year's Day 1873 I had made an extensive series of sketches which my wife collected in a book to be called "Periplus," in memory of our long journey round the coast of India I had by this tour gained ideas and knowledge, all available for my work in the Government

Then I made one more effort to induce the authorities to take steps for introducing a gold standard into India, while the relative value of silver was still fairly high, and before any tendency to fall should render such a measure impracticable But I met with no better success than that which had been experienced by me in 1868 I bestowed much care and thought on a project of life insurance by the State for the Natives, hoping that thereby they would become attached to the British Government I was encouraged herein by the success we had achieved in developing Government savings banks with Native depositors at all the chief centres in the country

The time approached for preparing the Financial

Statement for the coming year As no Income Tax was to be proposed, there was no need for any statement being made to the Legislative Council But as public opinion might expect that there should be some exposition of the Finances, that was given by me in a Minute on behalf of the Government of India, which was published in the Gazette Immediately afterwards I went with Lord Northbrook in his yacht up the Hooghly, and stayed with him at Barrackpore

I was now in the fifth year of my Finance Ministry, and had produced five Budgets or Financial Statements In each year surplus had been secured, and that was the test of my work The aggregate of surpluses, of income over all ordinary expenditure, during my term of office, amounted to six millions and a half sterling This amount would have been much more but for the Bengal Famine which, as will be seen presently, was to happen just in the closing months of my term It had been not only my ambition but my resolve to secure some such result as this I had cheerfully endured much trouble for the sake of this, and I felt thankful to Providence that I had been permitted to achieve it

The summer months rolled on favourably, at Simla, and the financial outlook was good I had the pleasure of accompanying Lord Northbrook and his daughter on some remarkable expeditions to the higher mountains near Simla But in the autumn reports came that the rains had failed in several parts of Bengal, and that in

some places there would be famine ere long This information naturally involved financial considerations Early in November I had travelled from Simla to Umbala near the foot of the Himalayas, and was at the railway station As I entered the carriage, when the train was about to start, a telegram was put into my hand from Lord Northbrook, requesting me to wait and accompany him straight to Calcutta We very shortly travelled together to the capital The business of Famine did not necessarily pertain to my Financial Department, but he arranged that all references pertaining thereto should be transferred to me So I virtually became Minister for Famine as well as for Finance Soon it became known that the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, Sir George Campbell, was for a time in failing health, and would be obliged under medical authority to return to England early in the following year One morning Lord Northbrook, after kindly explaining the circumstances, offered me the Lieutenant-Governorship of Bengal, one of the highest posts in his gift. This unexpected turn of affairs once more upset my plans On returning to my Treasury chambers, I reflected that this post, though not one which I should ordinarily have sought for, was now offered to me under anxious circumstances which might end in public peril, consequently there was but one answer possible Therefore I wrote to Lord Northbrook my acceptance with due thanks for his kindness

Shortly afterwards I accompanied him to Agra, where he was to hold a Vicelegal durbar, or reception for the Native nobles and princes of northern India At a meeting of the Executive Council in his tent, he explained to our colleagues the arrangement he had made regarding the Lieutenant-Governorship of Bengal I there met my wife, and Mr Charles Edward Buckland who had recently married her sister Meanwhile I had given up my apartments in Dalhousie Square at Calcutta, and taken a house at Barrackpore, at a short distance by railway train from the capital Returning to the Treasury chambers at Calcutta, I took up my double duties of Finance and Famine On the New-year's-day Reception at Government House 1874, Lord Northbrook cordially wished me a happy new year! After thanking His Lordship, I replied that if I survived the year it would prove the busiest and the hardest of my life

In January 1874 the Famine Reports came to me regularly from the Government of Bengal, and I submitted them, with my remarks, to the Governor-General I had frequent communications in those days with his talented and distinguished Private Secretary Major Evelyn Baring, now Lord Cromer, that conduced to my benefit and to the despatch of the urgent affairs then pending

One day Lord Northbrook sent for me from my Treasury chambers, and said how reports of the famine

had convinced him of the critical position in which the affair stood Consequently he proposed to place me at once in command of the famine relief operations in the field He hoped I would not mind waiving my rank as a Member of the Government of India, and serving under the Government of Bengal I replied that my services were absolutely at his disposal There might be technical difficulties, but the Act of Parliament vested him with great power in the event of public danger In the course of a day or so, he arranged matters with Sir George Campbell, and the requisite orders were officially published I had for my personal Staff Mr C E Buckland and Mr George Hart, who was a nephew of Sir Bartle Frere and had been my private secretary for several years The charge of my financial work I made over to the Governor-General himself I was glad to learn that ere long my successor would be my old friend Sir William Muir—who was then governing the North-Western Provinces, and who added the fullest administrative knowledge to profound Arabic scholarship and rare historic lore On my visiting once more the Treasury chambers to wish good-bye to the senior clerks, I was amused to find that they seemed to regard my conduct as almost derogatory They wondered how one, who had been at the head of their Imperial Department, could serve under a Provincial Government

When I had parted from my household circle at

Barrackpore, I went over to the Governor-General's residence hard by to take my leave late in the evening He told me of the strong desire felt by himself, and indeed by everyone, that there should be no loss of life in this famine—could I guarantee that? I replied that such a degree of success had never been recorded in the history of any previous famine But I and my officers would make such efforts that either this success should be attained, or else that the world should recognise the impossibility of attaining it We then parted, and I walked down to the river-side, where a boat was moored and ready to take me and my Staff across the Hooghly in time for the night train towards the north Amid-stream I looked at the lights of Barrackpore behind me and the lights of Serampore in front Then I felt that one long chapter in my life had closed, and that a new one, under exciting circumstances, was to begin

CHAPTER XI

(1874)—THE BENGAL FAMINE

Arrival in Behar—Scene of the threatened Famine—Plan of State Relief—Transit of food-grain from Burmah to bank of the Ganges—Further transport inland—Light railway from river to centre of distress—Tour in North-Eastern Bengal—Return to Calcutta—Receive charge of Government of Bengal from Sir George Campbell—Visit Behar—House-to-house visitation in the villages—My station at Monghyr—Recipients of State Relief—Rainy season—Suspension of the rains—My river voyages in State-barge the "Rhotas"—Return of the Rains—Danger of Famine averted—Relief organisation broken up—My sojourn at Darjeeling in Eastern Himalayas—Return to Calcutta—Address of thanks from representative Natives of Bengal and Behar

HAVING started by railway from Serampore near Calcutta late in the evening, with my Staff, Mr Buckland and Mr Hart, I reached Patna, the capital of Behar, the next morning This was in January 1874, and I could not help looking back on my arrival there as a neophyte in the Service in 1848, twenty-six years previously The sentiments which I had felt at Lahore, at Nagpore, at Hyderabad, now came back to me Though I had recently given six of the best years of my life to council in the cabinet, yet I knew that my real *métier* was rather in the field where I was now to be severely exercised

The situation, which had developed itself and had

to be encountered by Lord Northbrook's Government, was in this wise The population whose crops had been injured or destroyed by drought and who were threatened more or less with famine, dwelt between the left or north bank of the Ganges and the Himalayas They numbered about twenty millions of souls, though the danger to some of them was in a greater to others in a lesser degree There was no surplus rice in India to supply their need That had to be brought by sea from Burmah to Calcutta, by the British India Steam Navigation Company, then under the able chairmanship of Sir William Mackinnon From Calcutta it was conveyed by the East India Railway Company to the right or south bank of the Ganges It was thus collected chiefly at or near Patna, partly also at various stations lower down the river So far we had the help of two great European companies with the best mechanical appliances But then came the rub, the tug of contest for me The base of my operations was a mighty river, now low indeed, but soon to rise and widen daily with the melting of the Himalayan snows. These vast quantities of grain were to be carried down the steep river-bank and laden on flotillas of boats, to be towed across by tug-steamers to the opposite bank, and thence to be hauled up to the dépôts From the dépôts they were to be taken away by bullock-carts to the famine-stricken villages, distant from twenty-five to fifty miles This transport must be on a gigantic scale,

and under the command of one chief transport officer For this command I obtained the able services of Colonel (afterwards Sir Charles) Macgregor I spoke to the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Napier of Magdâla, regarding further assistance, and he said that the Army was for the service of the country I thus had the assistance of many excellent military officers, Europeans, and of many of the smartest among the Native officers I also had the zealous help in the field of my old secretary, Colonel Harry Rivett-Carnac, now Aide-de-Camp to the Queen

Crossing the Ganges, I and my Staff made a rapid tour through the threatened districts The soil was fertile but depended entirely on rainfall for its productiveness The country was one of the most densely peopled regions in the world The further we advanced from the river and the nearer towards the mountains, the sharper became the indications of the coming famine I perceived that the worst parts would be those lying between the town of Darbhunga and the British frontier adjoining Nepaul From the dépôts at Darbhunga, supplies would presently have to be drawn for vast multitudes of persons who would otherwise perish At that place the transport resources, for succour to the suffering villages, would have to be gathered But it was forty miles distant from the nearest point on the Ganges We could, indeed, land the stores at that point, but to drag them thence for

this distance was a formidable, though not an impossible, task So I proposed that a light railway should be made from that point to Darbhunga at the rate of a mile a day Lord Northbrook approved, and the work was entrusted to Captain Stanton of the Royal Engineers Then all the Civil officers in these districts helped to collect carts and bullocks in tens of thousands Requisitions were made on every village, and readily complied with by the cart-owners who were thankful for the employment Thus the whole strength of the Government and of the people was thrown into the operation I caused the earliest supplies to be collected in the tracts where the famine was expected to appear first In this work I was constantly associated with two young Civil servants whom I shall never forget—Mr Magrath since deceased, and Mr (now Sir Charles) Macdonnell at present the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces

I then found one peculiar precaution to be indispensable, namely a house-to-house visitation in every village to discover whether hapless persons were pining at home, in hunger but without complaint According to my information there were such persons to be found in most places But if we were to wait till they asked for relief, we should find them past remedy From my knowledge of the Native character, I was not surprised at this peculiar phase of it So I caused the visitation to be made effectual for its benevolent purpose

Having taken every precaution that could be thought of for Behar, I left the work in the hands of Mr (afterwards Sir Steuart) Bayley and under him, in the charge of Mr Metcalfe I then recrossed the Ganges, my object being to visit the region lying at the base of the Eastern Himalayas My way thither was by that very Rajmehal where, as a young man, twenty-six years before, I had a horrid journey On the opposite side of the Ganges I halted at the ruins of Gour, which were most imposing though they afforded little more than traces of their pristine grandeur Close to them I had a great dépôt and transport station In my tent I could hear the creaking and rolling of the cart-wheels in the nocturnal hours right under the walls of the ruined mosque I perceived that the distress in these districts would be more widely spread, but less intense than in Behar Having made the necessary arrangements there, I hastened back to Behar having received reports indicating that near Darbhunga the famine might be on us sooner than we had expected Having further strengthened my line of defence in that quarter, I returned to Calcutta, to report everything to Sir George Campbell before his departure

I had always been on the friendliest terms with him, and I, with my wife, stayed with him during these days at Belvedere, the Government House of Bengal, near Calcutta I well remember our sitting

together at afternoon tea for the last time Presently the sound of martial music and the tramp of horse were heard, as the guard of honour from the Governor-General came to escort Sir George to the railway station on his departure for England, viâ Bombay That evening my wife and I went out to dinner Coming home afterwards to Belvedere, we could scarcely believe that the house was our own for awhile The next day the same sounds were heard, and Colonel Earle (afterwards the well-known General), the Military Secretary, came to accompany me, as I was to pay my State visit to the Governor-General on assuming the Government of Bengal Naturally, the greetings between me and Lord Northbrook were cordial I had not exchanged such greetings since the days when I used to meet Sir John Lawrence At that moment, uppermost in the minds of us both, was the famine crisis He inquired anxiously, and I replied that every precaution had been taken throughout the vast field of operations I said, moreover, that a detailed estimate of the cost, both gross and net, after allowing for recoveries, was nearly ready, and would be submitted to him within the shortest possible time I would then, while still at the capital, ask for the sanction of the Government of India to this estimate, before returning to the field Accordingly, I obtained the approval of the Government of India to the estimate, which covered the months up to the middle of the

following autumn I wished for this formal sanction, knowing that public opinion, with generous impetuosity, will often urge commanders and administrators to transcendent efforts, overlooking the expense at the moment—and will afterwards be offended when, on the successful completion of the work, the cost comes to be defrayed I meant to make it clear that the instructions from supreme authority to me, to undertake operations of unprecedented magnitude, were given with a full knowledge of what the cost would be Fortunately, at the end of it all, I was able to report that we had worked within this estimate

I held a hastily arranged reception for the Native nobles and gentry of Calcutta, and explained to them that there would be more leisure thereafter for these courtesies, if my efforts to save the lives of their countrymen should be blessed with success I presided at one meeting of the Legislative Council of Bengal There was a Municipal Bill, in which my friend Mr (afterwards Sir Stuart) Hogg was officially concerned He had asked me to secure its second reading before my departure, and I made a speech to the Council which helped in securing that result I then said a few respectful and complimentary words to the Council, and begged them to excuse my absence for a while from their deliberations, owing to the exigencies of the time I gave some verbal and confidential instructions to the Chief Secretary to the Government of

Bengal, Mr (afterwards Sir Rivers) Thompson, which enabled him to despatch a mass of current business That same evening, towards the end of April, I set out by night train for Behar, leaving my wife at Belvedere

The principal officer with me in the field was my Famine Secretary, Mr (now Sir Charles) Bernard, who was my old friend of the Central Provinces, and who had been for some time holding high office under Sir George Campbell I had also Mr Charles Buckland as my Private Secretary, and Captain Spence as my Aide-de-Camp As we alighted from the train on the Ganges bank, I greeted Colonel Macgregor at his post in the centre of the relief operations The scene had changed for the worse since I was there in January The sun was hot, the air dusty, the river broader and browner The convoys, the flotillas of boats, the tug-steamers, together made a combination of bustling activity Crossing the river at a point lower down, I found the light railway to Darbhunga nearly finished

At Darbhunga I was glad to meet Mr Metcalfe, Mr Macdonnell, Mr Magrath, and to settle with them the final measures for fighting the famine which was now face to face with us We regarded this famine as an enemy that would attack us along a line extending over hundreds of miles On the point opposite Darbhunga his onslaught would be the earliest and the fiercest At that point, then, I would be present, and

see that when he came on he should be repelled in the proper way Accordingly, he did come just about the time we expected, and his attack was all the more critical because certain mistakes had been made by some local authorities, which I had to rectify by my own action At the first blush I thought that, after all my care, some lives would be lost, and the effect of that, at the outset of our campaign, would have been bad For several days I had to gallop about with Magrath, and especially with Macdonnell, in the dust and glare under a burning sun Thus everything was put right, food-grain was brought in the nick of time to the mouths of the imperilled people, and so the enemy was beaten off in the old way I had now found the way for coping with the famine in its hardest form, by experiments carried out successfully under my own eye

What had succeeded here would *a fortiori* succeed more easily all along our line I was therefore able to issue further and immediate instructions throughout the whole area of relief operations, whereby the famine, now imminent, would be met as fast as it appeared from point to point, day after day I had established telegraphic communication with most points of danger, and thus I was assured that we had the advantage of an auspicious beginning, that, contrary to the misgivings and vaticinations in many quarters, no lives were being lost, and that not even the humblest and the poorest had succumbed

Then, too, were apparent the results of the house-to-house visitation, village by village, which I had instituted during my first visit to Behar in January Multitudes of famishing people, too proud, or too apathetic, to apply for relief, had been searched out and taken away from the homes where they had laid themselves down to die These had been collected in troops at various centres where they could be properly fed I used to have these emaciated creatures marshalled in a sitting posture, in order to assure myself that their condition was being improved The melancholy of these parades was relieved by the certainty that, once discovered, the sufferers would be rescued from starvation Those who were affected by disease—and smallpox was then appearing in many places—were collected in field hospitals under medical care

I now saw that the light railway from the Ganges bank to Darbhunga the centre of distress, the bullock-cart transport, the relief operations generally, were in working order, and that the people were safe from famine in this the worst part of Behar for some weeks to come But this was only a part of the distressed area, other operations equally large were going on in several other quarters, and my care was demanded for all alike I therefore sought a spot which should be just behind the centre of the whole work, and that place without doubt was Monghyr So I took a house there, perched on a high cliff The railway to Calcutta

ran between the base of this cliff and the right bank of the Ganges From my perch I could descry with a telescope my several bases of operations, facing northwards On my extreme left were the transport-flotillas of Behar plying from morn to eve On my extreme right, in the Rajmehal direction, were the barges unloading the food-grain destined for Northern Bengal Despite the intense heat, every hour had to be utilised in order that the last ton of grain might be in its place by the middle of June, after which date the rains might stop all transit work

From this vantage point at Monghyr, I used to appear quickly by rail, by boat, or on horseback, at any point where affairs might not be going on quite rightly I also held what we called Relief Councils, at which my principal officers were present comparing notes But for a few days fortune was very unkind to me personally Whether from exposure to inclemency of climate, or from breathing field-hospital air, or from whatever cause, horrid boils broke out on my limbs, these not only spoilt my riding but even prevented any locomotion I concealed my pains as long as I could, fearing lest public anxiety should arise if it were to be whispered that anything was the matter with me At length I was confined to the house for a brief while Just at that moment my wife came up from Calcutta, to wish me good-bye before starting for England When she had to leave, it was grievous for me to be unable to

descend the long flight of steps from my home to the railway station to see her off But from my balcony I listened to the train as it passed along the base of the cliff and whisked her away I was, however, very soon out again, and took care to telegraph to the Governor-General from the field, in terms which showed that I must be on horseback, in order to counteract any rumours that might have arisen regarding my indisposition It was clear, however, that there ought to be a highly qualified medical man in charge of me personally during these emergencies I accordingly obtained the valuable services of Surgeon-Major (now General) Staples, who remained with me continuously and assiduously for many months

So the mill of famine relief went grinding along for many weeks, with dreary yet resistless force For millions and millions of people sustenance must be provided For those who were able-bodied some sort of employment was to be found To those who produced money wherewith to purchase, food grain had to be sold Empty grain-markets, where buyers could congregate, were replenished Those who could not work, and were penniless, had to be fed gratuitously Thus vast quantities of grain were dispensed, partly in return for labour, partly on account of cash received, and partly in charity By the 1st of May complete discipline had been established not only among all the relief and transit establishments including some

hundreds of thousands of men, but also among the people concerned, numbering many millions During the month of May it operated noiselessly but effectually, and the guerdon of success remained with us, for there was no loss of life

The situation of Monghyr suited my purpose so remarkably well, that it attracted the notice of Mr Archibald Forbes, the talented correspondent of the London "Daily News," who had been residing in Behar all this time, and had rendered national service by accurate and impartial observations, which had often corrected misapprehension in the public mind He visited me at my perch there, and said that the place was quite a strategic position from which the famine, like an armed enemy, could be combated I took him for a breezy gallop to the Moslem shrine in the neighbourhood, and told him how, twenty-six years before, I made my first sketch there

But from the middle of June, affairs entered upon a new phase The transit work was over, and supplies of food grain for several months were in the right places for all the people dependent upon us Meanwhile at dawn of each day as I woke in my elevated verandah in the perch at Monghyr, I looked towards the eastern horizon for rain-clouds Very early one morning I beheld that horizon dark with masses of vapour rolling up So the rains set in, and immediately hundreds of thousands left our relief works to go and

till their fields But soon the rains ceased for a while, and we feared that what had happened in several historic famines would happen to us now, namely that the failure of the rains in one year would be followed by a similar disaster in the next We were indeed quite prepared for this dread contingency, and had the reserve stocks in the dépôts to carry us over the autumn, up to the time when transport operations could, if necessary, be resumed Still the effect on the public mind of this cessation, or suspension, of the rains became marked at once The borders of the distressed areas enlarged themselves day by day In districts, not reckoned as distressed, the grain dealers, expecting further scarcity, shut up their granaries or raised their prices, and grain riots began to appear in North-Eastern, even in Eastern, Bengal

Meanwhile the rivers had risen so far as to afford me the means of rapid communication by water My vessel the "Rhotas" had been ordered up from Calcutta, and was moored near the base of my cliff at Monghyr She was a State barge, called a "flat" in the Indian Marine, and was attached to a powerful river steamer, the "Sir William Peel" On board of her I and my Staff were conveyed at railway speed down the Ganges in flood to Eastern Bengal Thence she took us easily and swiftly, backwards and forwards to many parts of the general relief area In the dry season the Ganges had been a cruel impediment to me, but now the river was

of the utmost convenience as affording me rapid transit I remained on board this vessel till the end of the famine relief

I thus reached Dacca the capital of this river-kingdom, and there met Lord Northbrook who had come from Calcutta in his State barge We cordially exchanged felicitations on the providential deliverance of our people from famine On that occasion some honours were being publicly bestowed on Nawab Abdul Ghani, the foremost man in the large Moslem population of Eastern Bengal In his speech Lord Northbrook, addressing the people under my charge, commended to them in the kindest terms my conduct during the famine relief operations Such an utterance, coming from him, strengthened my influence

Early in July the rains began again, this time descending with a regularity and copiousness that dispelled anxiety Week by week people went off our hands in vast numbers, and our expenses were proportionably reduced We could, however, by no means break up our organisation or relax our precautions, because the August rains might fail It was the failure of these very rains in the previous year that had caused the present famine Thus though the body of our system became attenuated, the framework, the backbone and skeleton, so to speak, of our organisation was kept up, ready for any crisis that might still supervene In August, however, the latter rains came in such a

providential manner that, humanly speaking, the coming harvest was secure Still many relief operations would be necessary until the new crops should begin to come in So the great organisation, though shrunken in proportions, was in its vitality preserved till nearly the end of September About that time I assembled the last of my Relief Councils at Monghyr, and with them advice decided to break up the organisation Some critics remarked humorously that I had dismissed the famine with costs! I was then thankful to report to the Governor-General that the famine relief operations were over, that there had been no decrease of the population from hunger, and not more than the normal rate of disease, that all establishments were being reduced, and all expenses ceasing, that the only remnant would be the stock of reserve grain, prepared for an emergency from which we had been mercifully spared

It was now lawful for me, after all I had borne and suffered during nine weary months, with unabating strain, to seek some comparative repose in my beloved Himalayas At dawn one morning as I left my pretty cabin in the "Rhotas" where much successful business had been done, I felt a wrench and a regret But in a few moments I was rolling along in a one-horse van, with my face set towards the mountains of Darjeeling The next day I was at the Lieutenant-Governor's house there, called "The Shrubbery," with my faithful companions, Bernard, Buckland, Staples and Spence After

the relaxing atmosphere of my river-kingdom in Bengal, I drank in the Alpine air I saw for the first time the rising sun cast his beams on the snow-masses of Kinchinjunga, and seem to set the mighty summits on fire But the tension on my mind had been so severe for a long time that I could not bend my thoughts, scarcely even turn my eyes, to the picturesque I found myself riding amidst matchless scenery, and yet making no sketches The house had not been recently inhabited by my immediate predecessors, and had become damp from disuse However we improvised fires, and then I buckled myself to prepare a final Report on the late famine The station as a health-resort was out of season and almost deserted, so I was quite free from distraction With the skilled and valued help of Mr Bernard, my Report was ready by the end of October, and was then transmitted to the Governor-General

Before returning to Calcutta I made a rapid journey through Orissa to see the system of canals for irrigation recently completed in that Province. I there saw the notorious car of Jaganath which was no longer permitted to crush its victims, and had long been out of use for any save ceremonial purposes. I chanced to witness at one of the temples a strange scene of excitable fanaticism Some foreign strangers by mistake tried to enter forbidden precincts The raving fury, and mad passion of the priests and attendants would have

provoked bloodshed, had not the arm of secular authority been stretched forth to keep the peace I visited the Hindu remains called by sailors the Black Pagoda, because being on the shore it serves as a landmark at sea I rode along the wide sands, the desolate strand almost underneath the sculptured ruins of the wondrous structure From seawards the heavy surf fell with a melancholy resonance on the shore, as if chaunting the dirge of departed grandeur I fancied that Dickens would have liked to hear this when he was expressing the thought of what the wild waves were saying

In November I proceeded to Belvedere to meet my wife who was returning from England After that, the crowning scene occurred in the history of the Bengal famine, so far as I was concerned The leading Natives of Bengal and Behar, as representing the entire community, wished to render public thanks to me for my conduct during the famine The Bengal men declared that they would express their sentiments in English The Behar men said that they would prefer to thank me in their own language, Hindustani, which I perfectly understood I had fixed a day for receiving them all at Belvedere, when the sad news was received from England by telegraph of my father's death after a short illness The leading newspaper of the Natives in Calcutta said that the Lieutenant-Governor, having succoured others, was now himself in grief After a delay of a few days,

the two important deputations from Bengal and Behar were ceremoniously received by me in the State apartments at Belvedere Certainly it was to me the most memorable reception that I ever held The spokesman for the Bengalis, in English, was Raja Degumber Mitter a thoroughly representative man The two addresses, the one in English, the other in Hindustani, were much to the same effect They summarised comprehensively the dimensions of the calamity which had been impending, and the various measures by which it had been averted They thanked me, personally, in the most hearty and explicit manner for my efforts on behalf of their imperilled countrymen They claimed for these efforts the most complete success Then they went on to thank in similar terms the Government of India, whose lieutenant I was, and especially the Governor-General who had conceived the plan of relief and had placed me in power to execute it They adverted to the British public opinion at home which had supported us throughout In reply I claimed their gratitude for the Governor-General and the Government of India I acknowledged the good conduct of their countrymen at large throughout the crisis, the munificence of all the Natives in the vast area of distress who could afford to give—the self-reliance of the poor who, instead of being pauperised by relief, relinquished the bounty of the State the moment that prosperity returned—the universal charity in all the villages, which both before and

after the famine obviated the necessity of a poor-law—the fortitude with which all classes of both sexes had faced the common danger—and I called them to join me in thanking Providence for having mercifully preserved us

CHAPTER XII

(1874-75)—THE GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL

Civil Administration of Bengal, Behar and Orissa—Belvedere, my official residence—Sojourn at Darjeeling—Visit to Booddhist monasteries in Sikkim—Record of Administrative policy—River kingdom of Eastern Bengal—Voyages in State barge the "Rhotas"—Native regatta at Dacca the eastern capital—Floating cities of boats—Tour to Assam and the Brahmaputra river—Visit of the Prince of Wales to Calcutta—Illumination of the city—Garden-party and banquet at Belvedere—Reception of His Royal Highness at Patna in Behar—Progress of affairs in Bengal—Departure of Lord Northbrook and arrival of Lord Lytton—My visit to Nepaul—Revert to Darjeeling—Inspection of Thibet frontier—Voyage to Gangetic delta—Disastrous waves from cyclone over river islands—Accept Governorship of Bombay—Proceed to Delhi for Imperial Assemblage—Am appointed delegate from Government of India for Madras Famine

WHEN I assumed the Government of Bengal, Behar and Orissa, the day-dream of my boyhood was fulfilled I was thus sitting in the seat of Warren Hastings, being the second Worcestershire man who held that position. This dream, cherished at first, then rudely set aside after contact with realities, then forgotten for six and twenty years, had unexpectedly come true at last

When I accepted the Lieutenant-Governorship, I contemplated seeing the country safely through its time of famine, which meant 1874, and governing it for one year afterwards in its ordinary condition, that is

1875 I still clung to the idea of soon returning to England My thought was that I must first save the people from famine, I could see about governing them afterwards

I settled down about December 1874, to the Civil government of my three great Provinces—Bengal, Behar and Orissa—with a population of over sixty millions of souls Up to that time, although current affairs had gone on well, thanks to my excellent Chief Secretary Thompson, still European society at Calcutta seemed disposed to take umbrage at my constant absence from the capital Perhaps they did not adequately bear in mind the paramount need, of saving life from famine, which had called and kept me away The feeling was cleverly reflected by one of the comic newspapers of the day in Calcutta by a cartoon representing my various modes of locomotion First I was seated in the observation car of a railway train, looking out of window in all four quarters Then I was riding on a mule, winding my way through packloads and transit-carts—next on an elephant, looking quite cross at the slowness of the pace Anon I was standing on the deck of my State barge, going at full speed with the river's current, then in a little launch pushing up into creeks and streamlets Lastly I was galloping on horseback up to the great gateway of Belvedere Park, my own Government House, over which was a large board attached, with the words "Belvedere to let" All this must have been meant

for satire, but, perhaps unintentionally, the satirist was conveying the highest form of compliment, and my hope was that I had deserved it When, however, I had settled down for a while at the capital, a cartoon of another sort came out, amidst a series of pictures then appearing of public men I was in Court dress standing before a mirror, evidently in some reverie relating to Indian promotion This time the caricaturist missed his aim, for my ambition, such as it was, lay far away from India

My official residence, Belvedere, was situate in Alipore a wooded suburb of Calcutta where Warren Hastings and Sir Philip Francis exchanged shots in their famous duel It was divided by a deep stream from the Mydan Park of Calcutta Between my park gate and this stream, lay a piece of ground which I converted into a Zoological Garden for the capital city In the middle of the park, studded with groups of trees, stood Belvedere House Its terrace overlooked a rich expanse of verdure — its flights of steps were environed by flowering creepers—its ponds were covered with lotus and water-lilies—its gardens were encircled with various trees, the banyan, the almond, the bamboo, the cotton-tree, and even by some specimens of the peerless Amherstia Christmas week and New Year's Day of 1875 were spent in comparative seclusion, after the news of my father's death in England But when the short period of mourning allowable to public men had expired, my

wife and I began to receive society at Belvedere In that lovely winter season, no changes of weather affected our garden parties, and the lengthening shadows from Oriental foliage fell on gaily dressed crowds At the evening parties it was difficult to keep our guests collected in the spacious ball-room, so many were the attractions to stroll on the terraces and in the gardens

As the hot weather approached, my wife, her sister, my daughter and my son Henry went up to Darjeeling in the eastern Himalayas, and took up their quarters in the house named "The Shrubbery," where I had been during the previous autumn I followed them there after a brief tour in South Behar, to see the canals of irrigation drawn from the Sone river Meanwhile I had caused a glass-room with wooden framework to be added to the house, and from it I formed my study There I could sit and work, with the Kinchinjunga group of mountains, more than twenty-nine thousand feet above sea level, in full sight—sometimes obscured by clouds at noon, but often seeming to be on fire at sunrise, and blushing pink at sunset My gaze reached far below also, right down to blue depths of valleys with streams not four thousand feet above sea level Thus my eye could take in at one glance some twenty-five thousand feet of mountain altitude The vegetation in these eastern Himalayas was far richer than that which I had seen at Simla in the western Himalayas The tree-ferns especially were among the most exquisite

ornaments of the vegetable kingdom Indeed from this glass-room, I used daily to behold one of the finest views to be seen in any country from a civilised and inhabited position

With this memory is mingled one melancholy incident It had been my good fortune to appoint an old Rugby schoolfellow, Mr Woodrow, as Director of Public Instruction One afternoon he had come to my glass-room with some departmental business During the course of the business, his breath seemed to fail him I stopped work, and asked him to divert himself by looking around He was a man of culture, and said that the sight did him good Indeed it was a sight of almost unearthly magnificence, for the sky and the mountains had an ethereal colouring which looked like the light from another world I did not foresee that this would be his last look on Nature Presently music struck up, for there was a garden party in the grounds, and I suggested that we should join the ladies At first he mixed with the company, but, his distress returning, he went home I never saw him more, for that night his heart suddenly ceased beating

Inside the Darjeeling mountains that summer, I had an experience which could hardly be matched anywhere else For I visited the Booddhist monasteries of Sikkim, with the experienced help of Mr (afterwards Sir John) Edgar Embosomed in the lower valleys near the base of the Kinchinjunga group of snowy mountains, there

lay these monastic structures of the new or debased Booddhism I found them to be most romantic and quaint, with their bamboo roofs in the form of umbrellas supported by gigantic poles—looking at a distance like enormous mushrooms—with their stone walls of massive thickness, their frescoes depicting a grotesque mythology, their paintings and carvings on wood of much artistic originality, and here or there their colouring of the deepest and richest hues The monks were handsomely and comfortably clad, being free from all prejudice of caste, they entertained me after my severe marching with delicious fare They invited me to their chapels, that I might hear their sacred music and witness the performance of their service The music was produced by long horns of brass So far as I could read their hearts, they felt a sincere faith in the strange and fantastic doctrines they had to maintain To be confined amidst walls of rock, and belts of forests with luxuriant vegetation, to gaze ever aloft towards pinnacles of snow, filled them with dreamy sentiments to be felt rather than expressed In one monastery I met with a group of images, the most curious ever seen by me in India It really was a representation of the Booddhist Triad, the three figures being in terra-cotta more than twice the life-size, beautifully limned and moulded The centre figure was sexless, indicating the abstract divinity On its right was the priest to preach the law of faith, on its left was the supreme magistrate with a sword to

enforce the same As I sketched this remarkable monument, an aged monk in his red robes sat with me As I rose to depart, he took me by the hand and said, "I am old and failing, I shall soon go to join them"—pointing to the figures

Shortly afterwards I came across the *habitat* of the largest kinds of rhododendron—the trunk being thirty feet high, the leaf a foot long, the bark full of red moisture The flower was of varying colour for each tree, crimson, pink or saffron-white, and each group of bloom was nearly as large as a man's head The altitude was about twelve thousand feet above sea-level, and even in the mildest season sweeping mists bleached the glorious bloom The background was the finest in the world, as yet known to geographers, for it consisted of Mounts Everest and Kinchinjunga the two highest peaks ever discovered

My predecessor, Sir George Campbell, had handed over to me the business of the Government in perfect order, with no arrears in any of the numerous departments, and with everything up to date all round He also left a memorandum, expounding the then state of the Administration, and recapitulating all current questions From that point I took up the threads of this immense concern On every point of interest that came before me, I recorded a minute Subsequently I had these minutes printed and bound up in two volumes I have often felt thankful that this precaution was

taken, because in these volumes my whole policy stands recorded, together with what I did or did not think, what I did or did not intend, in every particular over a vast area Mr (afterwards Sir Mountstuart) Grant-Duff visited me as a traveller I showed him the volumes of the minutes, and he seemed struck by the forest, almost jungle, of subjects with which an Indian Governor has to deal My first advisers Rivers Thompson and Steuart Bayley departed Then I made Mr Ross Mangles my Chief Secretary, he had won the Victoria Cross for valour in the time of the Mutinies, and his services to me were most valuable The subjects that came before me were not only diverse and striking, but were nearly all foreign to my previous experience in other parts of India Thus I was introduced each day to fresh fields of thought and action In this way the work, however hard it might be, had for me a peculiar charm, and was incidentally lightened by many diversions In many matters, social and other, I was excellently assisted by Captain Frith of the Royal Artillery who had joined me as Aide-de-Camp

In the summer and early autumn, say from June to October, Bengal was *par excellence* a river-kingdom The water, swollen by rain in the plains, and by melting of Himalayan snows—rose in the rivers and streams, causing them to form a network of navigable channels in a vast and thickly peopled region At that season land transit was suspended, and the trunk lines, the

highways, the by-paths, were all of water Boats were the only means of transit, superseding carts, wagons, vans, thus every agriculturist became for the nonce a boatman I availed myself to the full of this unrivalled facility of water-traffic, possessed by no other Province of India in a like degree, for inspecting the distant parts of my territories

The State barge "Rhotas," towed by the river-steamer "Sir William Peel," was the most amusing thing I ever possessed Besides her excellent cabins, she had a long saloon and a still longer deck, and these could be used for social purposes On Sundays there would be divine service in the saloon, the ship's bell sounding on deck, and in the absence of a chaplain I would read the prayers myself On a week-day I would arrive in the "Rhotas" opposite a large Civil station On that day there would be a reception on board for the European society, on the next day one for the Natives, and then I would depart for another station The two vessels, steamer and barge, were steered and managed, through rapid currents and tortuous channels, with a skill that commanded my admiration, and I shall ever remember my old river-captain On most evenings we stopped in time to afford to me and my staff an opportunity of rowing Though a 'prentice hand I acted as stroke oar, and we were not a practised crew At all events we had strength enough to row against the Ganges stream, though I recollect that once the current

nearly overcame us Attached to the barge was a little steam launch the "Fanny," in charge of a fine old Moslem lascar, a vessel most useful for ascending lesser streams, penetrating creeks and so forth The lascar used to take his soundings and cry out monotonously "Teen bum, mila nay"—or "three fathoms, touched nothing," which indicated a safe depth for us Thus we gave him the sobriquet of "Mila Nay" The launch was attached to the barge by a hawser, and as the big vessel turned round or swerved at a sharp angle in a narrow river, lashing the water into waves, and dashing it against the banks—the dances and the gyrations of the "Fanny" were laughable to the spectators, while Mila Nay bore his tossing with proud composure

Once I gave a ball on board the "Rhotas," opposite a great station on the Ganges The invitations were issued long beforehand, the guests being invited to assemble at a specified landing-place at seven in the evening of the day fixed On the forenoon of that day, spectators at the station could see no large vessel on the broad surface of the Ganges In the afternoon, however, the "Rhotas" with her steamer appeared, and anchored at a convenient distance from the shore At nightfall her sides were illuminated, and then she lay one mass of resplendence on the dark water, casting her tremulous reflections towards the shore Then she sent forth her pinnaces with smart lascar crews, led by the little "Fanny" under Mila Nay's guidance One

pinnace fetched the military band from the station, the "Fanny" and the other pinnaces brought the guests, whom I received at the barge's gangway The deck had been polished as a dancing floor, the saloon was a capital supper-room The dancing was kept up till past midnight, and in the small hours the pinnaces took back the guests, who turned to take their last look at the barge in all her splendour Then the numerous lights were put out, and early the next morning she was off again The spectators from the station looked at the Ganges once more vacant without any trace of what had happened the night before

In Eastern Bengal I was struck not only by the enormous number, but also by the marked variety in build and rigging, of the Native craft By these separate specialities the vessels were adapted to the strength of currents in certain rivers, and to the force of monsoon winds in others The building yards raised my respect for indigenous enterprise in the construction of boats Sometimes as a flotilla approached me under full sail, the horizon would be broken by objects which seemed like moving towers of brilliant white, set off by the rich foliage of the landscape around One day the inhabitants of Dacca, the capital of Eastern Bengal—under the leadership of Nawab Abdul Ghani, the chief Moslem in that part of the country—were pleased to hold an Oriental boat-race in my honour Having regard to the exquisite structure of the boats and the

elegance of the sails, that was the most picturesque regatta I ever saw.

I studied the manner in which floating cities of boats were regularly established for several months yearly, but never at the same points from year to year owing to the vagaries of the river Yet each one of these cities had its fixed name This arrangement was made because in each season the cargoes from one class of boats had to be transhipped to another class on account of the currents and the winds At the point of transhipment, which was variable according to the action of the river, the floating city of boats was set up The vessels were in parallel rows just like streets, and smaller boats were lashed together so as to afford roadways Merchants in their larger boats would exchange goods and arrange transactions Business would grow, markets would be filled, supplies accumulated, and all this on the bosom of mighty rivers miles away from shore

Once I made an expedition to the waters of the upper Brahmaputra, on board the "Rhotas," in order to visit the Province of Assam That Province had recently been erected into a Chief Commissionership, independent of the Bengal Government But it was partly to draw its supply of officers and men from me in Bengal for its various Civil services I therefore wished to ascertain what would be demanded from my resources So I moored the "Rhotas" at a point

opposite the hill-station of Shillong, the capital of Assam Thence I rode up to the mountain retreat to confer with the authorities I was there most kindly received by my friend, Colonel Keatinge, V C, the Chief Commissioner Then I returned to the river and to my vessel The waters being very high, the Brahmaputra had become like an inland sea between mountain-ranges So I decided to take a good sweep up stream to see the upper valley The potency of the current prevented me from ascending at any great speed, but the memory of views, beheld at intervals between the flying clouds, will never be effaced On the north from time to time peaks of perpetual snow, in the eastern extremity of the Himalayas, were clear cut in the distant azure Under them would be layer after layer of clouds, the upper surfaces of which were coloured by the sun's rays Beneath them again would be belts of forest interspersed with tea-gardens—and then a line of pea-green cultivation right down to the river's margin The river itself was dotted with lines and groups of country boats, in every variety of build, rigging, and sail Here and there a river-steamer would complete the wondrous combination of the scene

Thus I learned to appreciate the elements of which the Bengalis in their entirety were constituted The supposition was that the Bengalis had an intellectual superiority over all the Indian races, but were of a gentler, milder type than others, not addicted to

rough pursuits, and never enlisting in the Army Whether this supposition were quite true or not, regarding Bengalis on land, I found it to be not at all correct respecting Bengalis on the water Be the landsmen what they might—and many of them were more or less boatmen also—the watermen proper showed energy of physique, fibre of resolution, nerve, and presence of mind The Bengali river-sailors, indeed, were in their hard and arduous calling not surpassed by any race in India certainly, and perhaps not in Asia They were more Moslem than Hindu, and there was the ethnological question as to how far they were of the same blood as the landsmen proper Still I could not estimate fully the composite character of the Bengali nationality without taking into account the brave, sinewy, and hardy watermen of the eastern river-system

Towards the end of 1875 we were joyously preparing for the arrival of the Prince of Wales by sea at the mouth of the Hooghly His Royal Highness would be received by the Viceroy and the Government of India, and would be the guest of Lord Northbrook at Government House in Calcutta The assemblage for Native Sovereign Princes of Northern India was to be there The arrangements for their sojourn in the capital were to be made by the Indian Foreign Office The part taken by myself, and my officers, and by the people under my charge, was local only, and subsidiary to the plans of the Governor-General.

So I shall mention those matters alone in which I was concerned

Still, the capital, then as always, was under my Government I was answerable for order and safety, so all precautions were taken under my own cognisance At my side was my old friend Mr (now Sir Stuart) Hogg, as head of the Police and of the Municipality Upon his activity and watchfulness every reliance was justly placed

The inhabitants of Calcutta, as a great community, would offer their own entertainments for the gracious acceptance of His Royal Highness Accordingly, I had the honour of presiding over a mixed meeting of Europeans and Natives convened with this view Three entertainments were proposed, first, a ball to be given in the Town Hall by the European society, second, an Oriental entertainment by the Native community, third, an illumination in which the resources of all sections were to be combined We were not satisfied with scattered illuminations by public-spirited individuals without combination On the contrary, we held that the illuminations should be continuous and unbroken, along a given line of imposing length and commanding situation Such a line was accordingly chosen, beginning at the Belvedere bridge, ringing the Mydan Park all round, till it reached the head of a main street into the city Then it was to follow that street on to a great square surrounded

mainly by public buildings On this line, about four miles long, there were many public buildings Those which were governmental would be lighted up by the Government, those which were municipal by the Municipality Many houses, again, were private, those which belonged to rich men would be lighted up by their owners, those which belonged to poorer men would be lighted up with the aid of municipal funds or of general subscription But throughout the line, the lighting up was to be uninterrupted and upon a uniform principle

I steamed down the Hooghly to its mouth in the "Rhotas" barge, with my staff and Mr Mangles, to meet the "Serapis," the ship conveying His Royal Highness and suite, among whom was Sir Bartle Frere That evening the "Rhotas" was illuminated, and reposed as a resplendent mass on the broad bosom of the estuary The next day we all steamed up to Calcutta, and at the landing-place the Address by the Municipality was presented to His Royal Highness, who read a gracious reply I then proceeded through a road lined with eager though quiet crowds of Natives to Government House, in company with the Duke of Sutherland, who was in His Royal Highness' suite Then I stood at the top of the great flight of steps, together with Lady Emma Baring and my wife, behind Lord Northbrook as he received His Royal Highness My daughter was with the other ladies

assembled in the drawing-room to meet His Royal Highness and suite

Then I hastened back to Belvedere, which had become filled with guests, among whom was Mr (afterwards Sir Monier) Williams My personal Staff had to be strengthened for this busy occasion, and among the extra Aides-de-Camp was my son Henry The next day at eventide His Royal Highness stood on the great balcony of Government House, facing the Mydan Park, to see the fixed line of illuminations lighted up in its several parts on signals being given Proud I felt of the capital city, then under my administration, when structure after structure burst into light, with regularity of succession Then the Prince passed in procession along the great street and through the square, with the acclamation of the people in their multitudinous swarms

One afternoon I was to arrange, in honour of the Royal visit, a vast garden party in the Belvedere grounds for the European and Native community, including all the Native Princes from other parts of India besides my own Provinces After that I was to have the privilege of entertaining His Royal Highness at a banquet Before all this actually came about, I was to call at Government House and escort His Royal Highness—who was accompanied by Dr (afterwards Sir Joseph) Fayrer—for a brief inspection of one among the principal Hospitals Next we were to pass through

my new Zoological Gardens which His Royal Highness had graciously consented to declare to be open But my thoughts would wander towards my house and grounds, where my wife and daughter with my Staff were receiving the most numerous and diversified assemblage that had ever been gathered in that quarter At length I was thankful to be able to conduct His Royal Highness to the terrace of Belvedere, facing the brilliant throng in the Oriental landscape As the entertainment proceeded, select troops of warlike dancers, and other performers of national games from the distant frontiers of my territories passed in parade to do homage to His Royal Highness Then they executed their martial movements with a rude discipline, but with infinite picturesqueness The spectacle was at its height from sunset to nightfall, for then the illumination was arranged to creep over the scene, mingling with the light of departing day At nightfall the house was so lighted up as to coruscate against the dark sky, the roof-line, the windows, the terraces, being all outlined by lamps After the departure of the company, the illuminations were still kept up for the banquet which shortly followed

When His Royal Highness departed from Calcutta I went just ahead to Behar, in order to be present at the reception in Patna which the Commissioner Mr Metcalfe had organised in honour of His Royal

Highness' visit Behar was the country of the elephant stables, which were kept by a territorial aristocracy So the Native gentry had a noble parade of richly-caparisoned elephants This spectacle was truly Indian, and nothing but Indian throughout His Royal Highness then departed by train for northern India

Returning to Calcutta I learned to my sorrow that Lord Northbrook had resolved to resign his high office in the ensuing spring Afterwards we learned that Lord Lytton would be his successor It was now January 1876, and I had leisure to set the house of my own Government in order, as I contemplated returning to England in the spring also

I had been busy for more than a year with important matters relating to every part of my extensive charge During the winter session of 1874–5, and now during that of 1875–6, I presided over the proceedings of the Legislative Council of Bengal I felt grateful for the unfailing support which its Members accorded to me both as regards procedure and policy The foremost point was the further improvement of the laws affecting landlord and tenant, involving the rents, tenures and occupancies I was willing to guard the Permanent Settlement, as guaranteed by the faith of Government, and to maintain the position of the zemindars, or landlords, as part of that Settlement But I thought that the safeguards, which several of my predecessors had adopted for the security of the

subordinate rights in the soil, should be still further developed, according to the progress of agricultural industry As there were, in my time, no agrarian disturbances among the tenantry, on the one hand, and as the zemindars, according to their public organs, were in my favour, on the other hand—I ventured to hope that the balance had been evenly held I arranged to extend the existing works of irrigation in the thirsty tracts of south Behar My river-journeys had taught me how to protect low-lying tracts of vast extent from the invasion of floods In the general plan of the needful embankments, I had the aid of Colonel Haig my old friend of the Central Provinces With the advice of Dr Schlich the Conservator, I caused many forests in hilly and outlying tracts to be brought under scientific conservancy I especially attended to the sundarbunds, that is the forests which are threaded by a labyrinth of creeks near the junction of the mouths of the Ganges and the Brahmaputra I had seen that from these forests some of the best wood for boat-building was drawn

In no part of India did Public Instruction or National Education affect the public mind so much as in Bengal, therefore it had my continuous care Regarding elementary Education and middle-class or secondary Education, I had a fair scope without let or hindrance I thought that such Education operating on a virgin soil, ought to educe genius wherever found.

So my predecessors and I arranged a system of scholarships, whereby a peasant youth of genius might in an elementary school win a scholarship to sustain him in a middle-class school Thence by similar means he might ascend to a superior school, to a college, and at length to the University

But I lamented that the higher instruction was too exclusively literary, and too little directed to physical science The mind of the rising generation was turned almost entirely to professions already overstocked, while the knowledge that might conduce to industrial success was neglected When striving to remedy this I found great difficulty, owing to the constitution of the Calcutta University, which was not for Bengal alone but for all the countries included in the Bengal Presidency, and was under the Government of India direct Thus while Madras and Bombay had Universities of their own, Bengal had no University for itself, but only a share in the General University of Calcutta I asked that Bengal might have her own University, especially in order that we might cause physical science to be taken up by a nationality quite capable of following it

In order to ensure the success of our elementary instruction in physical science, I myself studied the particulars with the assistance of my scientific officers botanical, chemical, and biological—and wrote many minutes of my own directing the steps to be taken In these matters I received particularly valuable

assistance from Dr King the Curator of the Botanical Gardens I had to read the leading text-books and other works setting forth the latest ideas and results in each branch of science The evenings which happened to be free from company were usually devoted to these studies, and many hours in the daytime also, so far as they could be spared from my regular duties

At Calcutta the Roman Catholic College of St Xavier, in common with my own Protestant Colleges, received State-aid for Education It thus became my duty to attend the public functions and occasions of them all, thus witnessing their efficiency The Protestant Missionary Colleges were quite as good as our Government institution called the Presidency College It was noteworthy that physical science was well taught at St Xavier's, indeed one of the best instructors of my day in the higher physics was the Reverend Father Lafont

The condition of the poor Christians in Calcutta partly of pure European descent, but mostly Eurasian or East Indian, attracted benevolent attention in many quarters—especially in reference to educational requirements Their cause was impressively and pathetically pleaded by Archbishop Baly

As the people in my Province were growing fast in every branch of the national life, it was desirable that such growth should be accurately measured and recorded Therefore I strove to develop the statistical

bureau, which was placed under the immediate charge of Mr Cotton a talented and rising officer in my Secretariat

At the instance of Sir William Hunter the distinguished Editor of the "Gazetteer of the Indian Empire," I arranged the completion of the work for Bengal by detaching several selected Civil servants for the purpose

At this time I became anxious to confer an elective franchise on the citizens of Calcutta—Native as well as European—for filling the places in their municipal corporation I surrendered willingly my power and patronage in the appointment of Municipal Commissioners These seemed to be the only means of inducing the educated middle class of Bengalis to live contentedly under local administration, and to realise to their own minds the duties of citizenship By the irony of fate, whatever of justice or generosity there was in my intentions, proved unavailing—for I incurred more trouble with this than with any measure of my administration Indeed if I suffered unpopularity during any of my undertakings in Bengal, it was in this, for I was said to be in advance of my time However the thing was righteous and necessary, so it was done, notwithstanding the difficulty in the first instance of getting the Native municipal electors to comprehend their electoral duties

I was struck by the progress of sanitation in

Calcutta, since I first knew the capital in 1848 and again in 1860—owing to the grand works that had been constructed for water-supply and drainage. If a sporadic case of cholera, or other malignant sickness, occurred, I used to have its causes hunted up and traced to their source by sanitary officers, just as detectives were employed to track out crime. Even gangrene in one of the city hospitals was, by full enquiry, ascertained by us to arise from certain drains, and was, after this discovery, prevented.

Secondly to the Government itself was the High Court of Judicature and I was on the best terms with the Chief Justice, first Sir Richard Couch and then Sir Richard Garth. For the national welfare of a mixed community, European and Native, the dispensing of criminal justice was of the utmost moment. I had the power to mitigate sentences or to pardon entirely. If that power were to be exercised with undue leniency, or under pressure of emotional or sectional opinion, then moral mischief must ensue. I strove to support this great tribunal when it had vindicated the supremacy of the law under difficult conditions, especially too when it was holding a judicial balance between the European and the Native. On several occasions I was somewhat tried and even tempted, but as the Judges stood firm, I would stand by them. Notably, in one case, not by itself important, but of some consequence because European interests were concerned, there was

clamour in Calcutta against the High Court's action, and the voices reached even as far as England But the Court prevailed, as I declined to interfere with the sentences A sad case was one where a European soldier lay under death sentence for murderously shooting a Native Pressure was put upon me by several organs of public opinion, and I received touching memorials or petitions But the poor man had been convicted by a jury of his own countrymen, the Judge who passed the sentence, and the High Court headed by the Chief Justice, held that there was no just ground for interference, and I could see none after anxious thought So I had sorrowfully to say that the law must take its course

It was difficult for me to see personally as much of the Natives of the humbler classes as I had seen in Northern and Central India But with the upper class, and especially with the educated middle class, I had much intercourse I used to hold evening receptions at Belvedere for Natives alone, when I could attend to them fully, which I could not do at mixed parties, when much of my attention would be given to European ladies and gentlemen I would also take the Natives for a few hours on a trip down the river in my barge the "Rhotas," when their own Brahmin servants were on board to take care of them The men, however, who most required my observation belonged to the educated middle class Among them were men

who, to my great satisfaction, bought with their savings small landed freeholds at Decca and elsewhere In this category were those who conducted the Vernacular Press I gave interviews almost daily to members of this class I then perceived the germ of that which has since grown into the well-known movement bearing the name of the National Congress, or other designation The movement, however, though beginning, had not gone far in my time The desires and aspirations, which the men explained to me, were such as would find favour with any enlightened Government, and I used to assure them that these were the very things at which I was aiming on their behalf Such assurance disarmed them, and as they saw that my policy really conduced thereto, they became well-wishers of mine Still the Vernacular Press often used such language regarding British Rule, that the Government of India asked my opinion upon the subject After causing a great number of extract-passages to be translated and collated—I replied that there was often wild exaggeration in urging claims which were to some extent based on justice Sometimes, too, aspirations were indicated which could not be seriously or practically meant,—such for instance as the idea that Natives should control the finances while Europeans answered for war and for national defence Still there was at bottom far more of loyalty than of disloyalty. There was never-failing acknowledgment of

the many good and great things which the British had done

It was noteworthy that in the numerous addresses I received from the Natives in all parts of the country —documents which have honourably laden my bookshelves—a grateful mention of the famine relief in 1874 was universally and invariably made The impression left by that large measure on the Native mind was evidently profound, not only in those districts that had been distressed, but also in those which had been free from distress and had looked on with sympathy

The Brahmo sect which had originally consisted of Keshab Chunder Sen's followers, was in my time becoming subdivided into parties I saw that it had succeeded in destroying modern Hinduism, without adopting Christianity It was rather endeavouring to re-establish the ancient Hinduism of Vedic or prehistoric times The men were in my time apparently devoted to quasi-religious philosophy rather than to practical politics They may have modified their practice subsequently

In Bengal, as elsewhere in India, I strove to invest Natives with honorary functions, magisterial municipal, educational My idea was to make them participators in institutions towards which they might entertain a patriotic feeling, and for which they might be disposed to make a stand in the event of national danger In

this policy I felt, or fancied, that public opinion regarded me as being in advance of my time

There were three Natives who enjoyed much of my confidence as advisers The Reverend Krishna Mohun Banerjee an Anglican clergyman, though originally a high-caste Hindu, did, without at all derogating from his clerical status, keep up the most recent knowledge regarding the nationality from which he had sprung To me he was the most interesting Bengali of my time Kristo Das Pal, the Editor of the "Hindu Patriot" was an outspoken and candid censor, though to my Government a benevolent critic I had great pleasure in nominating him to be a Member of the Bengal Legislative Council Nawab Abdul Latîf was, as regards modern requirements, the best informed Moslem in my Provinces He used to lament to me that his co-religionists were falling behind the Hindus in education, and must therefore be beaten in the competition of life

The winter was always busy and lively in Calcutta, and at Belvedere I was often favoured by the company of visitors from England Among these were, Mr (afterwards Sir Robert) Fowler, the London City magnate and the Member of Parliament—Mr Brand, afterwards High Sheriff of Surrey—Miss Carpenter, who came on an educational and benevolent mission—Mr. and Mrs Corbett, the latter of whom wrote a charming book of travel The approaching departure of Lord

Napier of Magdâla, the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, caused the public mind to revert with pride and gratitude to his deeds of war in India and in Africa I presided at the meeting in the Town Hall which proposed the erection of an equestrian statue at Calcutta, and I became Chairman of the Committee for executing this memorial

During my tours, I visited the river-bank where Bishop Cotton met his death A steamer had been moored alongside, from its deck to the bank had been stretched a plank without railing Having just consecrated a cemetery, he was returning to the vessel, but missed his footing on the plank, fell into the Ganges current, and was never seen again I remember receiving from the chaplain, Mr Edgar Jacob (Bishop of Newcastle), a despatch announcing the death of Bishop Milman, which I attributed partly to prolonged visitations in the region of the Brahmaputra Near the foot of the Darjeeling Hills, I saw the treacherous beauty of the vegetation which tempted Lady Canning to stop for sketching, and so inhale the malaria which caused her fatal illness

One day early in spring I wrote to Lord Northbrook asking him to grant me an interview In the afternoon I drove from Belvedere to Government House, and then explained to him that, having completed my two years of office, I wished to resign before the spring should be over, and return to England In the kindest terms

possible he deprecated my proposed retirement As I drove home, and passed under the great gateway of Belvedere Park, I felt that by my own resolve the virtue of my high office was leaving me Shortly afterwards I received a letter from Lord Northbrook, particularly advising me to stay yet another year I had such faith in his knowledge and his friendship, that I agreed to do so

In due course I stood once more in uniform at the head of the flight of steps in Government House, behind Lord Northbrook as he received Lord Lytton, his successor Everyone welcomed with romantic interest the poet-peer as Governor-General Soon after that I was on the landing-place on the Hooghly bank to witness the departure of my old friend Lord Napier of Magdâla

Then I accompanied Lord Lytton in carriage drives all through Calcutta and its suburbs—explaining to him the various institutions, the material improvements, the sanitation, and everything that concerned the well-being of a great urban population When shortly afterwards I had the honour of receiving His Lordship at dinner in Belvedere, I caused the table to be covered with water-lilies and the bloom of flowering shrubs—all from my grounds—while the exquisite Amherstia flowers hung from the candelabras He exclaimed—"What beautiful flowers!" I explained that they were not gardener's flowers at all, but came from the indigenous shrubs and plants of the Bengal territories

Presently I made in Nepal a short tour which still shines like a star in my mental firmament Starting from my own territories in Behar, I rode through the belt of jungle and the wooded hills, which are the defensive outworks given by Nature to this Hill State Ascending to the valley and reaching Katmandu, I was most kindly received by the Resident, Mr Girdlestone I was presented to the King, had an interview with the famous Minister Jang Behadur, observed the troops during their exercises and manœuvres, visited the temples, traversed the fertile plateau, mounted to a height whence the snowy ranges could be seen separating us from Thibet, and enjoyed facilities for studying the politics of this, the most noteworthy of all the Himalayan States

The scenery was very pretty, but not at all comparable to that of Cashmere The Hindu architecture, with Chinese style and ornamentation, was marvellous, not paralleled elsewhere in the empire Its effect was richly composite and quaintly picturesque, in material, in form, and in colour

The aspect of the King was undemonstrative, as he reigned but nominally, without a thought of ruling The ruler was Jang Behadur, and I gazed intently at the man, whom I had ever regarded with misgiving, despite his admitted qualities The sanguinary barbarism of his youth had been subdued by occasional contact with civilisation and by old age His face and

men were as a mask and a panoply, to hide the conscious traces of the shocking scenes he had seen and the bloody deeds he had done I just fancied I could read a little of his past life from his countenance, and that was all But having won his points, he had ruled with rude justice and with mother wit His worth was afterwards proved by the fact that his work survived him

The real birthplace of the Goorkha warrior-brood was a valley secluded from European eyes But from my inspection of the stout and staunch infantry near Katmandu, I could understand the saying that, were it not for the British power, the Nepalese would burst their hilly bounds and sweep over the plains of Bengal There were no fortresses, and the Nepalese said they wanted none, because the Maker of mountains had vouchsafed to provide them with fortifications!

Then I joined my wife and daughter and sister-in-law at Darjeeling Soon I heard that, on or about New Year's Day 1877, an Imperial Assemblage would be held by the Viceroy Lord Lytton in Delhi, at which all Provinces of the Empire would be represented I would certainly take part, together with my Bengal people, on that occasion Then I was favoured by a letter from Lord Salisbury, the Secretary of State, intimating that a baronetcy had been graciously conferred upon me by the Queen, in consideration of high services rendered during the Bengal famine

I narrowly escaped an accident which exemplified

the risks attending all horsemen on Himalayan bridle-roads Close to Darjeeling I was riding quickly round a sharp corner on an Australian mare Meeting an officer, I took my right hand off the rein to return his salute At that moment my mare got her hind feet over the precipitous side of the roadway I instantly slipped off to relieve her of weight, and tried to hold her up, but in vain She tore herself away from me and fell—in a second or so I heard a crash—she had come upon the top of a great tree that rose up from below I obtained assistance and extricated her from the tree But she reached the shelving rocks at its base and swerved before I could catch her Then she went down headlong till stopped by a stump which staked her We made a sick-bed for her on the steep hillside and afforded medical treatment But she died, not so much from the stake-wound as from the nervous shock

As tea-growing on the Darjeeling hill-slopes advanced apace, the European planters became the pioneers of British influence in that mountainous region They formed themselves into a Volunteer Corps, and I used to give receptions and entertainments to encourage them in their patriotic efforts

At the end of that summer I marched among the higher mountains of Sikkim adjoining the Thibetan frontier The policy was to develop our East-Himalayan trade with those parts of Thibet which adjoined

us Already Darjeeling, originally a small health-resort, had become an emporium for Thibetan and even Chinese products Riding, walking, climbing, I gained the vantage-grounds on the frontier, whence I could take my sketches and observations To one of my servants who was toiling up a mountain side with me, I said—"Up there on the top you and I will see something grand" He replied—"Alas! what will a poor man see? To Your Honour, it will seem like the Hindu paradise—but to me it will look vacant and horrid" Thus we reached the deep-lying valley where Dr (afterwards Sir Joseph) Hooker discovered many of the beauteous species of rhododendron since introduced into England Thence I ascended to a lake fifteen thousand feet above sea-level—of a cold cobalt colour in the morning light, with Kinchinjunga white in majesty behind it Slightly descending we reached another lake, and behind it, again, was Kinchinjunga in the rose-light of evening

After that we proceeded for three days along the frontier, from fourteen to sixteen thousand feet in altitude, between Sikkim and Thibet A Thibetan boundary-commissioner had been sent from Lhassa, the capital of Thibet, to meet me, and we together found the boundary marks all right At first he could not understand my actual rank, but when he did, then suspicion seemed to awake in his mind as to why an officer in my position should be fond of sketching Moreover my pictures, painted on British foregrounds,

included in their scope lovely backgrounds and snowy summits, all in Thibet The sight of my efforts in water-colours made him more suspicious than ever The rocks, whereon I sat, would often be on the very border, and if I moved from one rock to another, there would be a Thibetan official to warn me when I was trespassing I could not help reflecting that this man, who hailed from Thibet, was really a servant of the Chinese empire Thus we two, bounding or climbing from rock to rock along the line of contact between two dominions, the British and the Chinese, were in this outlandish way representing the two most populous empires on the earth

One day a snow-storm—even in this the warmest season—overtook us Our camp was on a frozen swamp, and I happening to awake in the night heard my followers and attendants coughing all round So the next morning I struck my tents and taking leave of this lovely frontier with its chain of lakes, proceeded to altitudes less inclement in climate

In October, society at Darjeeling, headed by Lord and Lady Ulick Browne, gave a farewell entertainment to my wife and me After supper, in the toast giving, my early departure was deplored I left my wife at Darjeeling, whence she would travel direct to Delhi about Christmas-time to meet me there for the Imperial Assemblage

I then rode down to the Ganges, and went on board

the "Rhotas" while the rivers were still high Thence I joined the river-system of the Brahmaputra Like the Ganges, the great Brahmaputra becomes broken up into divers deltaic rivers, some hundreds of miles before it reaches the sea Of these rivers the principal is the Megna—which may be said perhaps to have an independent source of its own I wished to visit the Civil Stations and the populous islands near its mouth One afternoon, as we reached a certain point, a question arose as to whether the Civil Station of Noacolly should be taken first and the Megna mouth afterwards Without any cogent reason either way, I happened to decide that Noacolly should be visited first That decision was for me providential, for had I then gone on to the Megna mouth, we should have been caught in a cyclone and I might have gone down together with some hundreds of thousands of my people who, as will be presently seen, were lost that night As it was, I anchored the "Rhotas" for a time Early the next morning I steamed up to Noacolly, and there received a telegram from a neighbouring Magistrate, reporting that some catastrophe had occurred near a place he named, but that no details were as yet known I cut short my visit to Noacolly and steamed at full speed to the place indicated Arriving there I quickly perceived that during the previous night a cyclone wave had rushed over whole tracts thickly populated, that the loss of life had been dreadful, that the boats were spoilt

or disabled, and that the rural society was for a time paralysed It was fortunate that the first person who arrived on the scene should be myself, the very authority best able to do the needful The survivors and sufferers must have regarded me with my steamer as a *deus ex machinâ* I at once despatched the launch "Fanny" to the nearest telegraph station with messages to the authorities, to send officials, policemen and boats, with supplies This done, I went ashore the next morning with my Staff to inspect the scene of the deadly calamity The task was somewhat sickening, as corruption sets in rapidly amidst heat and moisture I learned that on the fateful eve, about three-quarters of a million of people had lain down to sleep without fear of any sort At midnight a cry arose—"The water is on us!" One wave came on with a dash and a sweep, in a cold cutting wind—then another wave, and yet another The hapless people, who had no time even to rise from their beds, were borne up and up, sometimes even their roofs were carried aloft with them Thus they reached the tops of the trees that with thick belts environed the homesteads—and there they were arrested For these trees had had thorns sharp and strong, which served as grappling hooks, and so held up the poor drowning souls After about two hours the flood subsided and the people came down from their trees to their desolated hearths The dead could not be counted, but their number was believed to be over two hundred thousand

The tale was so weird that I should hardly have credited it, had there not been verification at the moment and on the spot

The succour which I had sent for soon arrived, and then the waters became alive with busy boats, as was to be expected in this river-kingdom There was fear lest plundering and disorder should occur, as every official in the islands concerned—magistrate, policeman, tax-gatherer, postmaster, telegraphist, accountant, notary, all Natives—had been drowned However, I placed competent officials in charge, so that order might be restored and sufferers relieved throughout the islands

Returning in the "Rhotas" to central Bengal, I disembarked on the Ganges bank at the terminus of the railway to Calcutta, in order to travel to the capital by the night train I was just about to enter my sleeping-carriage when a telegram was put into my hand It proved to be from Sir Henry Norman at Calcutta—afterwards Governor of Jamaica and of Queensland—who was then acting as President of the Council in the absence of Lord Lytton up country—communicating from Lord Salisbury, the Secretary of State, an offer to me of the Governorship of Bombay, in succession to Sir Philip Wodehouse, who would be retiring at the end of April 1877 The next morning, at Belvedere, I reflected that the offer was kindly made under conditions honourable to me Reports were rife of a coming famine in the Bombay Deccan in 1877, and of troubles with

Afghanistan which might put some strain on the military establishments of the Bombay Presidency So I accepted the offer with due thanks and acknowledgments That day I received from Lord Lytton a message by telegraph, expressing in the most gracious terms his gratification at what had occurred My plan of returning to England had now been, for the fourth time, upset, and in that respect the fates seemed against me

In the quiet of Belvedere I penned the concluding part of my Administration Report for Bengal, with some friendly and sympathetic words for the people, whom I had liked so well and whom I was about to leave I then made preparations for joining the Imperial Assemblage at Delhi For Bengal—as for each one of the main divisions of the Indian Empire—a camp was to be set up at Delhi To that camp I was to bring up with me a certain number of my European officers and of my leading Natives Lord Lytton was so good as to say that the Government of India would on this occasion confer titles of rank on a limited number of Natives, Hindu and Moslem, whom I might recommend for honour Accordingly I was thankful to choose several men of both categories, for whom I had the highest regard I was thus able to obtain for two eminently representative persons, Jotendro Mohan Tagore and Narendra Krishna, the highest titles which could be conferred on Hindus They were truly notable in descent, in status, in good works.

Thus I arrived by railway at Delhi, with my circle of Bengal friends, ladies and gentlemen, European and Native. In the canvas vestibule of the big tent in my camp, I found my wife and daughter together with Mr. and Mrs. C. R. Lindsay, my son Henry, and others. My camp, like the other State camps, consisted of a long street of tents with the largest tent at one end. I looked round the camps of my brother Governors, and reflected with some pride that, though others might display more rank and dignity, none could show men with such large rentals as those of the territorial landlords whom I had brought with me from Bengal and Behar. At the head of our camps, the Viceregal camp had been organised with due form and ceremony. To it Lady Lytton and her suite lent an attractive grace. To me, as to other Governors, a silken banner was given, on one side of which my armorial bearings had been worked, and on the other side an inscription to the effect that it was a gift from the Queen-Empress. This was borne before me as I rode to the Assemblage on the Proclamation Day. Some of my brother Governors were saying that they might have some difficulty in suitably placing their banners when they returned to England. I said that mine would exactly suit the old staircase in my ancestral home.

Excellent chroniclers have described the day when the Queen was proclaimed Empress of India—that day

of the field with the cloth of gold, which was probably the largest field ever instituted anywhere, and was possible only in India Tartar conquerors and Mogul Emperors had held enormous displays of this character But none had ever one so complete as this—and so comprehensive in its completeness For it really comprised all India from end to end Lord Lytton gave State banquets evening after evening, and after each of them he made a notable speech to the company He was highly gifted as an after-dinner speaker, and was a master of splendid language, indeed, the assemblies were aglow with his speeches

After one of these banquets, my old friend Sir John Strachey, who had recently come from England as Finance Minister of India, took me aside, and said that the Governor-General and his Council were growing anxious regarding the prospects of famine in Southern and Western India There was particular apprehension regarding the outlook in the Madras Presidency, and the manner in which a possible crisis should be met He added that the Governor-General in Council wished to send a delegate of their own to Madras to see the distressed districts, to confer with the Governor there and his officers, and to report the result to the Government of India Then he asked whether I could recommend anyone for such a deputation I replied that I could not at the moment think of anyone, but that I could go myself, if my services should be acceptable

He highly approved the idea, and doubtless spoke to Lord Lytton on the subject. The next day His Lordship sent for me and said that he was most desirous of thus deputing me. I replied that I should be proud to undertake the duty at His Lordship's behest. He then said that not a day was to be lost, and that he would immediately nominate the officer to whom I might make over charge of the Government of Bengal. I was the next day informed that my *locum tenens* would be the Honourable Ashley Eden, the Chief Commissioner of Burmah, who was with us in the Imperial camp. I then went to see the Governor of Madras, the Duke of Buckingham, who had a camp in the Assemblage just like my own. His Grace received me with much kindness, so we arranged that I should at once visit the distressed districts, and then proceed to Madras to confer with him. Two days afterwards the Imperial Assemblage broke up, and I, having arranged a fresh Staff for my new work, left Delhi for Allahabad, *en route* to Calcutta. I took my Bengal party, European and Native, with me so far. There I quitted them, and reciprocated all the expressions of their regret at my sudden and unexpected severance from them. Captain Frith, my Aide-de-Camp, was to accompany my wife to Belvedere, where she had to arrange the transfer of our household from one side of India to the other. For I had quitted my house without the least preparation for permanently

relinquishing it, and had, so to speak, left everything standing Within my recollection a great author had said that departure from life had better be sudden and unexpected, without leave-taking, without last wish, without farewell In such wise was my departure from Bengal

CHAPTER XIII

(1887)—DEPUTATION TO THE MADRAS PRESIDENCY

Journey from Delhi to Allahabad—Thence to Deccan and Hyderabad—On to Madras Presidency—Distressed districts and famine-relief—Life in my railway-carriage—Visit to Duke of Buckingham at Madras—Travel in Indian Peninsula—Sight of Cape Comorin—Ruined city of Bijayanagar—Christian Missions in Tinnevelly—Final visit to area of distress—Departure for Bombay Presidency

EARLY in January 1877, having quitted the Imperial Assemblage at Delhi I travelled with my Bengal friends by railway to Allahabad At that junction-station I watched my Bengal train proceeding onwards for Calcutta, till it disappeared from sight Then I crossed over to the Jubbulpore line, accompanied by my newly constituted staff Mr Buckland and Colonel Stirling Rivett-Carnac This crossing, from one side to the other of a great railway station, was for me the leaving of one section of my career and entering upon another I travelled by that night's train to Bombay, and was joined on the way by my old friend Mr (now Sir Charles) Bernard as my Secretary The medical man on my staff was Dr Harvey, a talented officer Later I had the help as sanitary adviser of Dr Townsend, who had done excellent work under me in the Central Provinces

Thence we journeyed to Hyderabad in the Deccan, by that very railway for the construction of which I had obtained the sanction of the Nizam just before departing from the Residency in 1867 I found the Minister and the Resident absent on circuit Yet I stopped for a moment in the Residency, walking through the empty halls once familiar to me, and meeting many of the Nizam's officials, my old acquaintances The manner of these men, though most deferential, was amusingly different from what it used to be when I was Resident They had been amazed in 1867, when I left their stately and courtly Residency to fish in the troubled waters of Finance Still more was their wonder now when I was leaving a palace at Calcutta in possession, with a palace at Bombay in prospect, in order to tour rapidly and roughly amidst scenes of misery and starvation I rejoined that the English race is inured by training, and marches through hardship to honour Then I proceeded to the nearest district of the Madras Presidency where the famine prevailed

I had now to consider carefully my delicate and difficult position On behalf of the Government of India I was delegate to the Government of Madras I was to see on the one hand that all real distress was promptly relieved, and on the other hand that public money should not be spent before it was actually needed This famine in Southern India was setting in earlier, and the relief expenditure was beginning

sooner, than had been the case with the famines in Northern and Eastern India On this account some financial anxiety was naturally felt I had no executive authority in respect to famine relief But I had the fullest latitude for inspecting and examining All the Madras officers were to give me every assistance, and I was thankful for the courtesy and heartiness with which they did assist me My mission indeed could never be successful unless I maintained cordial relations with them I was to report to the Madras Government all I saw and learnt, and to make whatever suggestions and recommendations might occur to me I gladly acknowledged the favourable manner in which that Government received the reports rendered by me There was a generic resemblance between this famine and that with which I had dealt in Bengal, but with variations Owing to the railways, the difficulty of food-supply was light as compared to what it had been in Bengal The task now was to find employment and sustenance for the multitudes of rural labourers whose occupations in the fields had suddenly gone The operations were dispersed over many districts, often separated from one another by ranges of mountains In Bengal the water-supply continued to be good in the area of distress, an immense advantage for the public health Here, however, it was, after the drought, precarious and indifferent Hence cholera with other epidemic diseases arose, and thousands perished

thus who might at all events have been saved from starvation I undertook to inspect each locality concerned, and every large group of people seeking or obtaining relief These groups were already forming themselves everywhere, and would grow or multiply every week, though the full complement would not be reached yet awhile Among them all I noticed the same fortitude in extremities which had been seen in other Provinces of India As the Duke of Buckingham truly said, their conduct exemplified patience in life and death

In these affairs I received valuable support from Sir Alexander Arbuthnot then a Member of the Governor-General's Council He had formerly been a Member of the Government of Madras, and acting Governor also

The season of the year was for the moment at its best, but would soon become hotter Sometimes I journeyed in bullock-vans, or in palanquins, or on horseback But the railways carried me to nearly all the central points of our work The Madras Railway Company kindly assigned some carriages to me and my Staff My compartment soon became like a study or sitting-room with the bluebooks and papers around me I had to transmit almost daily a mass of statistics with reports to the Government of Madras, and copies of them to the Government of India Much of the locomotion was accomplished in the night time, and

during fully half the nights in the many weeks of my delegation, I slept in my carriage while the train was moving

After thus inspecting the northern part of the Presidency, I visited the Governor, the Duke of Buckingham, at Madras, to explain verbally all I had seen His Grace received me most kindly, and then I departed to continue my inspection in the central and southern parts of the Presideney

This running to and fro, over many degrees of latitude, lasted from the beginning of January till nearly the end of April, 1877 It carried me past many places of the highest beauty or interest, and would, in this respect, have been most instructive had I been visiting Southern India for the first time But I had visited the Madras Presidency twice before, and now I had hardly a moment to spare for sight-seeing So I passed by the Nilgiri Hills, the well-remembered cities of Trichinopoly, Tanjore, and Madura, almost without notice Nevertheless I contrived to visit several fresh places, partly because my duties took me there

Thus I ascended the rock-fortress of Gooty, commanding a wide view of the drought-stricken area, and overlooking the mango grove where the great Sir Thomas Munro was mortally stricken with cholera I mounted to the top of the abrupt Nundidroog, on the Mysore plateau, where the famous Sir Mark Cubbon used to dwell, and I walked on the terrace up and

down which he used to pace I rode by a zigzag bridle-path to the summit of the hill that overhangs Arcot and Vellore, with the landscape sacred to the memories of Clive and Dupleix There was to be a great gathering of distressed people for my inspection amidst the ruins of Bijayanagar near Bellary Having despatched the necessary business, I looked over these time-honoured remains Here was the capital of the Hindu Power that barred the way to the Moslem invasion of Southern India Here the Rajput King and all his chivalry were defeated in a pitched battle, deciding the fate of the dynasty and of the Indian Peninsula Even in its desolateness, the situation of the city was romantic In the midst of aridity the river made it an oasis, and the neighbouring hills furnished granite for its masonry The channels, fountains, cisterns, bridges, elephant-stables, towering gateways, basements and pediments, attested the grandeur of the past Remembering Southey's "Curse of Kehama," which opened with some noble stanzas invoking "Bali, great Bali," I visited the temples indicated, namely those of Maha-balipuram near Madras They were literally wave-washed on the rocky strand I admired the skill with which the Hindu architects had hewn chambers out of the sea-side rocks, and carved the rock-masses into shapely and stately fanes I watched the surf dashing up to my feet as I sat on the temple steps In the same region, I visited the now tenantless palace of the

Native chief who sold to the East India Company the strip of sand on which Madras now stands with its half-a-million of inhabitants

More especially I visited the Tinnevelly district, and marched southwards until I descried Cape Comorin I allotted some brief time to studying the missions of the Church Missionary Society and of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel I met Mr Sargent and Mr Caldwell, just as they were about to be consecrated as missionary bishops I conversed with the Native pastorate and the lay-helpers, examined the organisation of the Native church, attended service in the consecrated buildings, inspected the schools, and visited the Native Christian villages I learned from the Civil officers, and other impartial witnesses, how good was the character of the Native Christians, how attentive they were to the ordinances of their faith, how well-behaved and industrious in their private life I was profoundly impressed with the actual magnitude and the moral effect of the results achieved

After the middle of April the date approached when I must proceed to Bombay I had inspected everything without stint of labour, and had made every suggestion possible Under Providence all would go well, if only the rains in the coming monsoon should be vouchsafed, and these would be due by the beginning of June If they should fail, then further arrangements would have to be made by others after my departure

I then crossed the northern border of the Madras Presidency and entered the Nizam's dominions on my way to Bombay I telegraphed to the Duke of Buckingham at Madras my hearty farewell, with final thanks for all the kindness and consideration received from His Grace and his officers under trying and abnormal circumstances

END OF VOL I

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