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ASIA IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY
By Alexander Frederick Whyte, K. C. S. I., LL.D.

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

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BY
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K. C. S. I., LL.D.

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ASIA IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

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I

THE VARIETY OF ASIA

The Orient begins at the Landstrasse, the eastern suburb of Vienna; and the traveller, going east and south, looks out upon a landscape on which Asia has laid her mark in the towers and domes of churches and secular buildings alike. The Magyar of Hungary originally came to Europe from the steppes of Central Asia: the Carpathian Mountains are sprinkled with villages whose inhabitants are wholly Semitic: Islam is the prevailing faith in Bosnia and Albania to this day; and the footprints of Asiatic rule—or misrule—are to be seen all over the Balkan Penin-

sula. Eastern Europe from the Danube to the Golden Horn was long the highway of Asiatic peoples in migration and the battlefield of their armies. From the walls of Vienna to Stamboul the land has its stormy history written broad upon it. Its every feature bears witness to the proximity of Asia.

But these are now the vestiges of the past. The tide which brought the Asiatic to Europe has long since receded; and if it ever returns, it will come, not by the flood of conquest, but by other means. If Asia, or any part of Asia, appeals to arms against Europe, her victory, though it may well impair our prestige, will not imperil the territories of Europe as in the days of Attila, or of Roland, or of John Sobieski; for the scene of those great conflicts which we sometimes profess to descry on the horizon of the future, lies more probably in farther Asia itself and not on the confines of Europe. Since the fall of Constantinople and the opening of the sea-road to

the East, Europe has turned the tables upon Asia; and the Asiatic is to-day in the grip of forces greater than any which he himself can command. He has lacked the power to withstand the inroad of the West, but the antagonism aroused in him by our advance has engendered a widespread revolt against European influence, which is the most conspicuous feature of the modern East.

There are many to-day who believe that this revolt is a sign that the long ebb of Asiatic influence is over and that the turn of the tide is at hand. The traveller, the merchant, the soldier, the missionary, each and all can bear witness to the awakening of the East in the past twenty years; and if some have drawn hasty and sweeping conclusions from their own meagre evidence, I hope I may justify the present endeavour by saying that it is an enquiry, pursued with a mind as open as my western origin will permit, and seeking not conclusions where nothing can be

concluded, but light on a matter of great moment to us all.

That the spirit in which the East and the West will look at each other in time to come is a matter of moment to the whole world cannot be doubted. The two continents stand face to face, at the close of the first quarter of the twentieth century, no longer as the possessor and the possession, but as disputants claiming an inheritance on conflicting grounds. The European makes his claim by right of conquest, followed and largely justified by the benefits of stable government, law and order, internal development and scientific progress. The Asiatic claim is the simple right of birth, the claim of the native to live undisturbed in his own land, under as little or as much government as he chooses to tolerate, but above all, under his own government. Now, if these competing claims could be easily settled, there would be no problem. They are not settled yet, nor will they be easily or

quickly settled, because part of the Asiatic claim begs a fundamental question, namely: whether any Asiatic nation, with the doubtful exception of the Turks, and the still unproved exception of the Japanese, either knows or cares what government is. Or to put it in a more concrete manner, whether any Asiatic nation, having forsaken its traditional form of government (namely, autocracy) has displayed the capacity to establish and maintain any other form? If the answers be negative, the Asiatic claim to that political status which President Wilson called self-determination falls to the ground. For the moment I leave the attempt to seek these answers to a later stage in my argument. Let us observe, in the meantime, that the uncertainty as to what the answers will be is due to certain qualities or defects in the Asiatic, or in most Asiatics, which in themselves explain our presence in Asia. If the Asiatic possessed the qualities which are the sinews of Eu-

ropean power, we should not be in Asia to-day.

None the less, the day is now past when Europe could take what she chose from Asia heedless of the consequences of her action. Asia is no longer supine; and in proportion as Europe has acquired possessions in Asia she has awakened in the Asiatic the desire to recover them. The awakening desire has found expression in many forms and has prompted Asia to educate herself in a Western way in the hope—which explains much of the prestige of Western education in the East—that Western instruction might breed the capacity to expel the Westerner.

Europe's inroad in the East has thus created the appearance of a new Asia. Whether the real Asia has undergone reincarnation in this new Asia remains to be seen, and we may assume that the issue is still in doubt. The Unchanging East has suffered so many changes in our generation that the dogma of Oriental im-

mutability no longer goes unchallenged; but the depth and permanence of these changes is unknown and must long remain open to question. The influences at work, however, are not in doubt. They are both evident and powerful. They appear to have carried all before them in the intoxicating rhythm of material progress, followed by political revolution, economic disturbance, and even religious change of which no man can foretell the issue.

We shall watch in a moment, some of these forces at work in certain Asiatic countries and attempt to describe the results. But as we unfold the map let us observe that the word Asia is no more than a convenient geographical expression which cannot be made to cover anything resembling that continental unity of culture which the word *Europe* covers. Asia is the name given to the greatest land area in the world, stretching from the Arctic Sea to the Equator and from Constantinople to Yokohama. It is forty

times as large as Germany, India alone nearly equalling Europe, and China outnumbering the population of Europe (without Russia) by nearly two to one. Its rivers are oceans in themselves, and I have travelled on the Ganges in the normal flood of the Southwest Monsoon when the river had become a vast inland sea, with the land horizon on one side of the ship invisible. Moreover, the Dutch East Indies if laid down in the northern hemisphere, would span the Atlantic Ocean.

Now, mere magnitude, however imposing, is no more than a moment's wonder; but it begins to clothe itself with meaning when we discover that great distance begets great difference. In Asia, physical and cultural contrasts are deeper and more numerous than in Europe; and the cultural unity of the continent, which some observers profess to see, has little more than a shadowy existence in fact. It is true that we notice certain qualities

which all Asiatics appear—to our eye—to share in common: it is also true that, for instance, the spread of Islam from Arabia to Malaya and to China might seem to denote a certain unity of culture in different parts of Asia; but place the speculative, religious Hindu alongside of the secular Chinese, or the Mussulman beside the Brahmin, and the fundamental contrasts in Asiatic minds are at once plainly evident. Even within British India there are such profound differences of race and culture as to make a sympathetic observer doubt the possibility of a true Indian nationality. I have more in common with the German, the Dutch, the Swiss, the Austrian, the Scandinavian, and even with the French and Italian, than the Turk has with the Hindu, or the Arab with the Japanese. Europe is one, not Asia: and the East as a whole presents greater contrasts in climate, race, colour and mind than any other continent.

The exaggerated conception of Asiatic

unity which prevails to-day in the West has, it would appear, two origins. On the one hand, those who seek religious light in the East profess to find throughout Asia, certain fundamental common elements which, they say, explain the birth of Hinduism and Buddhism in India and the remarkable fact that Buddhism, which was Indian in origin, made such progress in China, Malaya and Siam as well as Ceylon. The truth here is that Buddhism is of no account whatever as a living force in the land of its birth, and though India has influenced religious thought both in China and Japan, the fact that other countries have taken what India has rejected is proof, not of their likeness to India, but of their difference from it. On the other hand, the unity of Asia is a phrase constantly on the lips of Asiatic politicians in their campaigns against European influence. Asiatic unity here is merely an alliance against the presumed aggressor of alien origin and

has no foundation in any internal community of interests, thoughts, culture or race. The argument runs—We Asiatics must stand together against the intruder, therefore we are one. And they are encouraged to believe in their oneness with all other Asiatics by the heedless manner in which certain alarmist authors, European and American, herd all the non-European peoples together as the "World of Color". The only gleam of humour in this thesis of hyperbole is the implication that Europeans are colourless. It is, perhaps, a natural error to suppose that because the skins of the brown men appear alike, therefore their thoughts are alike. The history of Asia shows that they are not.

Now, though the thesis of the cultural unity of Asia is, on the whole, untenable, we shall find ourselves using generalisations about Asiatics and Europeans which may appear to justify the conception of the two continents as representing each

anity, and particularly of Protestant Christianity.

Now, cross to Asia and seek similar evidences of unity. Apart from the generalisation that Asia is the home of religion, apart too, from the general prevalence of certain mental attitudes due probably to climatic conditions, there is nothing to compare with the phenomenon which we have just witnessed in Europe. Judged as the religious continent it is divided, like Cæsar's Gaul, into three worlds: the Muslim, the Hindu, the Buddhist; with the doctrines of Confucius, and the Shintoism of Japan, as half-secular, half-ritualistic fringes on the great many-coloured religious mantle of Asia. From this enumeration I omit the Jain and the Sikh, which are the by-products of Hinduism: I pass over Bahaism which is—or was—so great a power in Persia: I ignore the two warring sects of Islam, the Shiah and the Sunni; Judaism, even with its unique offspring in the greatest of all religions,

we may disregard: and the Fire-Worshipping followers of Zoroaster appear nowhere in the account. With our gaze fixed on the three great worlds of Asian religion, the briefest glance at these phenomena serves to convince us that Asia is a picture of variety and diversity, not of conformity and unity of thought.

There are, no doubt, forces which unify. The dominance of Hinduism in British India with its marvellous assimilative capacity which enables it to endure forever, tends to counteract the effect of divisive influence; but even Hinduism divides India as much as it unites; for Brahmin supremacy places a greater gulf between caste and caste, and between the Brahmin himself and the lower castes, than any which exists between social classes in any other country. And if we turn to the world of Islam we can see the followers of the Prophet, in every country, united in their faith, but divided in their mundane allegiance. The yearly pilgrimage

to Mecca, in which tens of thousands of Musulmans from Anatolia, Palestine, Egypt, Arabia, India, Malaya and China take part, unites these brothers in the faith and preserves their orthodox integrity against the forces which assail them *in partibus infidelium;* but, if Mecca thus unites, Islam itself divides. For proof of which we need go no further than the columns of our daily newspaper where you will find, running like a refrain through the telegrams from Asia, the oft-repeated story of Hindu-Muslim riots in India. Islam, moreover, imposes a divided allegiance on the individual Mussulman. Wherever he lives, the follower of the Prophet looks to the Caliph as the sovereign defender of the Faith and owes to him an allegiance as binding as the citizenship of the country where he lives. In 1881, Abdul Hamid II gave the world a resounding remainder of his claim as Caliph, when in the appointing a Muslim from Tunis Grand Vizier, he declared that

he had the right to command the services of all true followers of the Prophet, wheresoever they lived. And we have recently seen evidence of the international power of this allegiance in the concern of the British Government not to wound Muslim feelings in the negotiations of the Treaty of Sèvres.

It is thus possible to prove that if there is diversity there is also unity, and that if there is unity there is also diversity. All that need concern us here is the will to appreciate, as far as Western minds may, what Asia is, in all her variety of religion, art and race. But how far can Western minds, or indeed any mind, appreciate what Asia is, even as a physical phenomenon in land and water. One of the ablest of English journalists has reminded us that it is difficult for any man to place India alone in true perspective; for, as he complains, the average Englishman who does not know India, always forms a limited and local picture in his mind, usu-

ally constructed out of missionary stories or the tales of big game hunters. "He thinks of it either as a green delta, or a series of sun-baked plains, or a wild region with jungle and river and farms all intermixed; or a vast park stretched out by Nature for sportsmen, and sloping somehow at the edges towards highly cultivated plains. It never occurs to him that as regards external aspect, there is no India; that the peninsula so called is as large as Europe west of Vistula, and presents as many variations of scenery. East Anglia is not so different from Italy as the North-West Provinces from Bengal, nor are the Landes so unlike Normandy as the Punjab is unlike the hunting districts of Madras. There is every scene in India—from the eternal snow of the Himalayas, as much above Mont Blanc as Mont Blanc is above Geneva, to the rice swamps of Bengal; from the wonderful valleys of the Vindhya, where beauty and fertility seem to struggle consciously for

the favour of man, to the God-forgotten salt marches by the Rann of Cutch. It is the same with indigenous Indian society. The Englishman thinks of it as an innumerable crowd of timid peasants, easily taxed and governed by a few officials, or as a population full of luxurious princes, with difficulty restrained by scientific force and careful division from eating up each other. In reality, Indian society is more complex and varied than that of Europe, comprising it is true, a huge mass of peasants, but yet full of Princes who are potentates and Princes who are survivals, of landlords who are in all respects great nobles, and landlords who are only squireens, of great ecclesiastics and hungry curates, of merchants like the Rothschilds and merchants who keep shops, of professors and professionals, of adventurers and criminals, of cities full of artificers, and of savages far below the dark citizens of Hawaii.

If India alone thus baffles the grasp of the human mind; how much more must

Asia, of which India is but a peninsula, caution us not to pretend that we can easily comprehend her. We have already glanced at the magnitude of this continent, and by comparison with the known we have endeavoured to encompass the unknown; but such a bird's eye view of geographical expanse is dominated by the factor of distance, and only when we come down to the teeming earth do we find evidence of that bewildering variety which has justified our scepticism about Asiatic unity. The continent which embraces the Arab and his desert, the Afghan and his mountains, the Bengali and his swamps, escapes the range of a single eye. It is perfectly true, as Professor Butcher once said, that Asiatic politics have been stricken by a fatal simplicity. The rule of an autocratic sovereign, be he Sultan, Amir or Maharajah, is simple indeed compared with the rule of law; but the political simplicity covers an unreckonable multitude of races, customs, beliefs, and

costumes which present to the observer's eye the very confusion of complexity and variety. We need not labor the point by making the obvious contrasts between the mosques and the temples, the headgear and the footgear, the houses and the furniture of Arabia, India, China and Japan. The fact is self-evident; and if it offers fascinating objects to the eye, it also is the outward sign of profound differences of mind.

I have already indicated some of these psychological contrasts by pointing out the difference between the mind of the Indian and the mind of the Chinese. Let me further illustrate the theme by relating two incidents which reveal contradictions in the same type of mind.

Early in my time in India I read, not for the first time, Rudyard Kipling's story 'The Miracle of Purun Bhagat", a good tale in itself, and one which reveals a fundamental characteristic of the Indian mind. The Prime Minister of an Indian

State has reached the pinnacle of his career. Loaded with honors, wielding the autocratic power of his master, the Maharajah, with almost unchallenged authority, he holds the state in the hollow of his hand, enjoying the sense of mastery over all he surveys. At the very height of his fame, he hears the call of the other world, lays aside his office, doffs the imposing insignia of his orders and walks out of the palace on an early morning, making his way up to the Himalayan Mountains, there to lead the life of a holy man. The time had come for him to shake off the shackles of this world and to place himself, by silent devotion, in communion with the omnipresent god. The call of the infinite, the other world, religion, name it as you please, had come to him, more imperious than any tie which bound him to earth, and he must obey.

The story had an interest for me greater than its mere merit as a tale told by a master of English prose. It seemed to

throw a bright light upon the psychology of those with whom I was associated in the work of the Legislative Assembly. The next morning after I had read it I gave it to one of the most active young members of the House, a rising politician from Western India. He brought it back to me saying, "I did not know that Kipling knew India so well. That story is true."

"You mean," said I, "that the summons to religious devotion is a call that may come to any of you and must be obeyed?"

"Yes," he said, "that is the fulfillment of our destiny; and all that is implied in it is more important to us than any other thing."

"Really more important than everything else?"

"Certainly it is."

"More important than the political future of India, for instance?" I asked. Then with a smile, he said, "If I admit

that, you will think that I do not care enough for my own political ideals."

"Not at all," I replied, "but those things that men prize most are the things they will make the biggest sacrifices to win, and if a leader of men like Kipling's Prime Minister, is ready to sacrifice his own career, and perhaps also the interests of his State, to his personal religion, the progress of the people may be retarded."

"Progress will go on without him and others will take his place. But I will confess this: that even if progress were to stop, the call of religion is still supreme."

I then asked him if he knew the phrase common in English religious literature, "The saving of his immortal soul."

"Oh, yes," he said, "and that is just what I mean. The Prime Minister was saving his soul by renouncing the world."

"That is sometimes done in Europe too, but it is not typical. So, taking you as representing the East and me as representing the West, the difference between

us is this, that I am brought up to believe that my destiny is to work out my salvation here on earth, and that you in the last resort can only work it out by escaping from the earth."

He hesitated, then said, "Yes, that is the Difference."

After a moment's silence he declared with all the emphasis of convinction, "This world is illusion. *Maya* we call it. You pay too much heed to it, and so you lose sight of the eternal."

"I think we do," I replied, "but what you have said helps me to understand why political progress in India is comparatively slow. We've got down to the root of the matter. You care more in the last resort for the unseen, and therefore your mind is not naturally adapted to statecraft. Your preoccupation with religion is the real origin of your inability to realise your political ideals. If you do not think it blasphemous for me to say

so, it is not England that stands in your way, but religion."

"I know what you mean, and I do not think I can deny it."

And with that I put on my President's robe, and went into the Chair of the Legislative Assembly with my mind full of other things than parliamentary procedure.

The other incident reveals a different aspect of the Indian mind. At a recent meeting of the Bengal Legislature a letter was read from a Swarajist member, Mr. U. C. Chatterjee, complaining that Mr. Cook, the Commissioner of the Burdwan Division, and Mr. French, the District Magistrate of Bankura, visited the town of Vishnupur, where he resides, and did not pay him "a visit of respect." He added:—

"Their salaries are subject to the vote of the Council, and I am an elected member of the same. So they owe their maintenance to my vote and are bound to pay

me respect. If you hold otherwise, I will hold the Government of India Act is nothing if not a farce. . . . If I demand a reply it is because I want to prove to the world that no amount of Government of India Act will raise the status of the Indians, who must learn to stand on their own legs if they want the status of equality with the free nations of the world."

This gentleman preferred the shadow to the substance of his political position because he prized more the superficial evidence of his dignity as a legislator than the actual power which he possessed in the Legislative Council. His sensitive concern for personal prestige is called *izzat* in Urdu and plays a very large part in Indian life. It derives its prevalence from the universal love of ceremony and from the importance which is attached to the relative social position of individuals. The greatest care must be taken, not only to accord to each Maharajah his due number of guns of salute and his proper place

in the hierarchy of rulers at any public ceremony, but also to recognise the relative status of much smaller folk. And this has led to a preposterous reverence for precedence even among Englishmen in India.

But here again generalisation is risky. India has two distinct standards of merit. The anecdote related above gives you one of them; a very mundane concern based on social or official precedence. But the other has the more powerful sanction of religion. In Hinduism you are born to a certain station in life; but the social pyramid, in which you find yourself one brick among three hundred million, is designed not to give power and precedence to wealth or territorial possession, but to place the priest at the apex, the soldier below him, the trader below the soldier, while the rest of the world forms the broad base of a powerless social and religious proletariat. Thus a menial may be a Brahmin and a Maharajah may be an

outcast. I had in my service a messenger belonging to the Legislative Department of the Government of India who, because he was of high caste, looked with the eye of patrician scorn upon most of his official superiors who earned in a day as much as he could in a month, but who were lower in the caste scale than himself. Here, you will observe, our customary standards of value are reversed in an instance which will serve as well as any to illustrate that when we cross from Europe to Asia we are literally in a different world. The Western mind must of necessity purge itself of its innate assumptions and conceptions before it can take the first step towards the comprehension of Eastern ways of thought. The briefest rehearsal of some of the contrasts between Asia and Europe, some of which we have already glanced at, will suffice to show how alien in psychology and in moral reckoning these two continents are. The brotherhood of man is a noble concep-

tion, and the Colonel's lady and Judy O'Grady may be sisters under their skins, but with the best will in the world, no man can obliterate a certain fundamental antagonism, not so much of race or colour, as of ethical substance, between the Asiatic and the European.

The conversation arising out of Kipling's story, which I have related above, gives in brief compass, a whole world of religious difference. The contrast in political thought is equally marked, for if Europe is rich in political theory and adventurous in political experiment, Asia is barren in politics and has no political writings worth the name comparable with the fertile libraries of political philosophy which Europe proudly possesses. In personal relations, the Asiatic bears himself differently from the European. He is callous, cruel and spendthrift of life, yet kindly and revering life, nay sometimes openly worshipping it, as the phallic emblems of Oriental religions

exist to prove. Loyal to a fault, yet treacherous as Europeans rarely are: fanatical and fatalistic: volcanic and indolent: greedy for profit, yet caring little for the riches of this world: and finally, judging truth and lying by standards which we cannot accept. A lie is a move in the game in Asia, no more. A European liar, found out in falsehood, no matter how hardened he may be, cannot escape a feeling of obliquity; an Asiatic liar only regrets that his untruth was not artistic enough to deceive. But no sooner have we made this generalisation—which, mark you, most Europeans would endorse from their own experience in Asia—than we are reminded that Asia has her indigenous methods of banking and commerce which prove that good faith is a widespread quality. A Scottish banker in Bombay said the other day that the *hoondee* system could not have worked in India unless the countless traders who used

them had confidence in the integrity of those with whom they were dealing.

Now the nearest approach to the truth in generalisation about Asia will not bring us to the heart of the mystery of the difference between the two greatest continents of the earth; for it cannot show whence the profound diversity arises nor why it so often breeds complete misunderstanding. Color, as the emblem of physical contrast, is not the explanation, for it is no more than a sign of something more deep-rooted within. Moreover, if colour were the only obstacle it would be surmounted. Outside the Anglo-Saxon world, colour prejudice rarely prevents the marriage of brown and white: and only, so far as I am aware, in the United States and in British India is the offspring of such a union regarded as a pariah. I would go farther and deprecate the use of the word *colour* altogether, for in modern controversy it has become synonymous with *inferiority;* and if we com-

mence our enquiry with the assumption that the Asiatic is inferior to the European we may as well abandon the search for truth altogether. If we acknowledge that there is room in the human race for different kinds of excellence, if we realise that men may be called to fulfil functions so different that the qualities they possess and the principles they profess are diverse and obviously belong to worlds apart, then we are in a frame of mind to appreciate the truth that Europe is the offspring of Asia, and that if the son has outstripped the parent in the swift and exuberant enjoyment of life, he has not shown much appreciation of the meaning of life. To the parent, the meaning of life is more than life itself.

The consequences which follow from this first conclusion reach far into the life of the two continents. Whatever be the originating cause, whether it be climate or some other source of influence, Europe has taken hold on life with both hands

and has sought to wrest from it all that physical power and intelligence could make it yield. Hence the activity of the European: hence his marvellous exploitation of the forces of nature, his unremitting concern for good order in government and progress in science and manufacture. He has the reward of his efforts in such a mastery of the physical world that he can move across and under the sea, ride the air, and send his messages round the globe in a few moments. The control of matter has given him the control of men. The less advanced peoples have all fallen under his sway, either by direct conquest or by commerce and education. Moreover his experience in self-government, at all events in Western Europe, is the result of personal qualities which give him a certain ascendancy over other men. He has a passion of patriotism: a virtue in which, on the whole, the Asiatic is deficient. It is significant that the word patriotism is not easy to translate

into an Asiatic language, for either the true equivalent does not exist, or it has a connotation which is something different from "love of country." On this question, competent observers differ, I know. The truth seems to be that, while the devoted service of the Japanese under fire may be attributed to patriotism, it is patriotism in the form of dynastic fidelity, and not the conscious expression of national pride. Most Asiatics will die for the faith, for their divinely ordained monarch, for their tribe; but that blend of nationalism and territorial allegiance which we call patriotism does not deeply animate them. To us, this feeling is an essential part of public opinion and a firm mainstay of fortitude in time of trial: to an Asiatic it is a sentiment—as when the Bengali shouts *Bande Mataram*—sometimes violent in expression, but not a consistent influence in thought and action. It is probably stronger in Asia today than it was a generation ago, but

whether it will grow to the full power which it wields over men in Europe is hard to say. Even in Europe, let us remember, it is closely wedded to the conception of nationality and of national sovereignty which are comparative modern growths. And since these conceptions are not native to Asia, at all events in the form in which they prevail in Europe, the atmosphere favorable to the growth of patriotic feeling does not exist.

Now, since we are mainly concerned with modern Asia as a political study, this observation which we have made regarding patriotism becomes highly important; for, in the absence of this compelling force, the contemporary experiments in self-government in Asiatic countries lack one of the conditions of success. Let me recall the conditions laid down by John Stuart Mill, which are necessary to the proper operation of any form of government:—

"1.—The people for whom the form of government is intended must be willing to accept it, or at least not so unwilling as to oppose an insurmountable obstacle to its establishment.

"2.—They must be able and willing to do what is necessary to keep it standing.

"3.—They must be able and willing to do what it requires of them, to enable it to fulfil its purpose."

For autocracy in Asia, we may say that these conditions have been fulfilled. For the new experiment in democracy, Asiatic peoples do not offer much evidence that they are either willing or able to fulfil them. "No one," says Mill in another passage, "believes that every people is capable of working every sort of institutions"; and therefore the birthright of life, liberty and happiness does not neces-

sarily imply a birthright of self-government.

Let us take Mill's three conditions in their order. The first is for the moment fulfilled in appearance; but owing to the ease with which usurping dictators have mastered the infant democracies of Turkey and Persia while rival dictators have all but strangled it in China, the conditions are obviously not fulfilled in reality.

The second is even more doubtful of fulfilment. The absence of public opinion in most of these countries condemns the new regime to instability.

As for the third, the subordination of private to public interest is uncommon, and therefore the attempt to substitute the rule of law for the personal will of the autocrat encounters a stubborn obstacle. To quote Mill once more:—"A rude people, though in some degree alive to the benefit of civilised society, may be unable to practise the forbearance which it demands; their passions may be too vio-

lent, or their personal pride too exacting, to forego private conflict, and leave to the laws the avenging of their real or supposed wrongs. In such a case, a civilised government to be really advantageous to them, will require to be in a considerable degree despotic; to be one over which they do not themselves exercise control, and which imposes a forcible restraint upon their action."

The Asiatic retort to this indictment reminds us that the East has only just embarked on the new course, and that, if the child is father to the man and may show the qualities and defects which will make or mar the adult, he does eventually grow to be a man. Asia therefore pleads for time. The Indian carries the plea still further and accuses England of standing in her way and stunting her growth. There is not much to justify the Indian complaint. India has gained more, far more, than she has lost by British rule; but the Englishman does not always real-

ise that when he denounces the irresponsible character of the Indian politician, he has himself done but little to develop or to test that quality in those whom he condemns. England has stood in the way of India, in the sense that Englishmen have held all the responsible positions until recent times and that British legislation, till 1919, gave Indians inadequate opportunities of learning how to govern themselves. But Indians forget that it is little more than one generation since they, themselves, took any interest or any part whatsoever in politics, that the pioneers of Indian political progress were Englishmen like Sir Thomas Munro in Madras, in 1824, Allan Octavian Hume and Sir William Wedderburn in the National Congress, sixty years later; and that the growth of the institutions of self-government, even in countries better equipped for them than any in Asia, has been slow.

Moreover, though Asia, absorbed in contemplation of the invisible world, can-

not claim the same natural or acquired fitness for government as Europe, the fountain-head of her political unrest to-day is her refusal to acknowledge that her preoccupation with religion precludes her from demanding and exercising political rights. In the chapter which follows we shall witness the opening scene of this new drama on an old stage.

II

POLITICAL CHANGE: A BIRD'S EYE VIEW FROM THE NILE TO THE SEA OF JAPAN

Let us now unfold the map which prompted these observations; and owing to the magnitude of its extent and to the limited time which we can give to the study of it, we must take for granted most of the historical knowledge which is necessary if we are to understand the meaning of its coasts and frontiers. But, as an introduction to our survey of the political condition of modern Asia, we will trace the causes of change from their origin down to our own day in a rapid review.

It is now some four hundred years since Europe embarked in earnest on the discovery and exploitation of the East. The

first to open the gates were the Portuguese. They were followed by the Dutch, the English and the French; and by the eighteenth century the European inroad upon Asia had grown to the proportions of a great imperial movement. Trade increased from the mere exchange of goods until it became the foundation of political control and provoked wars in its growth. Wars in their turn brought new territories into European possession, and the pacification and settlement of these territories compelled the conquerors to set up a vast fabric of administration for the civilian government, the dispensing of justice, the economic exploitation, and the military defence of the countries concerned. The wealthy trading corporations of Amsterdam and London—each of them called The East India Company—ruled territories and amassed fortunes on a vast scale, acquiring such power and responsibility that eventually they had to be dispossessed by the Governments of Holland

and Great Britain. Thus the instruments of Western civilisation were brought wholesale to the Orient, and with them, the ideas of which they were the symbols and agents.

It would be a fascinating task, but too great for our means and our time to-day, to study the manifold effects wrought by European influence upon Asia since first Vasco da Gama sighted the shores of India. Whether we contemplate the economic revolution embodied in the railways, factories and telegraphs, or the assault upon ancient tradition by modern education, or the endeavour to Christianise the Orient by religious missions, we see opening before us vistas of exploration and research which have already been entered by students of all nations and which repay every effort made to traverse them. Our goal, however, lies beyond them. For, significant and alluring as these subjects are, they find their supreme culmination in the most significant of all

features in the modern Asian landscape, the dethronement of autocracy which is the traditional and indigenous form of government, and the establishment in its place of the alien representative principle. Here, the victory of Europe is all but complete; and in recording it we cannot fail to observe that it is most complete in certain Asiatic countries—for example, Turkey and China—in which the Asiatic himself is master and free to do what he likes with his own. Whatever be the extent of the political revolution, and whatever be its form, the phenomenon is to be found ubiquitous in Asia. Here, then, is the new Asia: and here we may tarry to examine the novelty.

We will open our enquiry in Asia Minor and proceed stage by stage across the great continent till we reach Japan, leaving only British India out of the itinerary because the special conditions in which the Indian experiment of representative government is now being conducted, and

my special knowledge of them, justify a separate and more detailed account of modern government in India.

The Republic of Turkey provides an illuminating object lesson in political change, from an autocratic monarchy to a parliamentary republic; but it also, and more significantly, shows a religious change which, if it had been made by any European Power, would have set the Muslim World ablaze from end to end. The Sultan of Turkey is no more; and within a brief time of the abolition of the Sultanate, the Turks at Angora decreed that there should be no Caliph of Islam. Thus an historic power, combining in itself two sovereign functions, passes from the scene, leaving Turkey in the crucible of a political experiment in western democracy, and the theocratic world of Islam without its traditional head.

The young Turks, who are the promoters of this Revolution, commenced operations in Salonika some twenty years ago when,

under the influence of Western education, they set up the Committee of Union and Progress as the organ of their revolt against Abdul Hamid. In 1908 their opportunity came when a mutiny, which was really a military *coup* with a political purpose in which the young Turks themselves played a part, broke out in the Turkish Army. Abdul Hamid was deposed: his feebleminded brother was placed on the throne: and the Committee of Union and Progress ruled in Constantinople. The Committee itself, now forming the government of Turkey, was curiously composed, and its composition does much to explain both the watchwords of the Revolution and the subsequent policy of the Turks. Though they were Turkish Nationalists to a man, many of them were not Turks, and few of them were orthodox Muslims. Most of them had spent years abroad, in Paris, Berlin, and London, where they acquired a superficial knowledge of western politics which found ex-

pression in the motto of the revolution—"Liberty, Justice, Fraternity." Not for long, however, did they conceal their true nature; and, while liberal Europe was still singing the praises of Turkish Reform, they proceeded to translate their Turkish nationalism into the practical form of oppression and massacre.

Abdul Hamid had made much of his position as Caliph, using the Pan-Islamic movement to further his own ends. Herein he showed that he appreciated the historic function of the Caliphate and its importance as a weapon of contemporary power. The Young Turks, however, turned away from Islam and aspired to re-create Turkish hegemony in the Near and Middle East by placing themselves at the head of a Pan-Turanian confederation of all the peoples from the Mediterranean to the Arabian Sea who could be regarded as having an affinity of race and language with the Turk. The idea had no roots in reality, and offered no serious

rivalry to Islam; and we may regard it as evidence of the spurious understanding of western scientific research which the Young Turks had acquired in Europe. Moreover, their contempt for Islam itself springs from the same source. The more advanced among them regard the Koran as effete, and thus fail to appreciate the immense power which the name and the word of the Prophet still wield in the Moslem World. Too late, during the Great War, did they endeavour to regain the support of the Mussulman peoples outside Turkey by proclaiming a *Jehad*, a holy war against the unbeliever. Muslims in Arabia, in India and elsewhere spurned the appeal on two grounds. First, they knew it be insincere: second, if the Allied Powers were infidels, so also was the Kaiser. With later events before us, however, we can see that if the summons to a holy war fell on deaf ears, the same ears were ready to listen to an appeal when the Turkish Caliph seemed to be in

real danger from a hostile Europe in the period which opened after the War, and closed with the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923. It is true, no doubt, that the British Government exaggerated the concern of the Indian Mussulmans at the time, and played a not too creditable part at Lausanne in consequence; but the concern itself was real, and it is somewhat surprising that the Turks did not shape their subsequent policy so as to retain the goodwill of Moslem India. That they forfeited it utterly I shall presently show.

Meanwhile the domestic transformation of Turkey was proceeding apace. There was indeed still a Sultan *in* Turkey, but he could no longer be called the Sultan *of* Turkey, for his writ ran no further than the vicinity of Constantinople. Throughout Anatolia the democratic tide was in full flood, with the virile personality of Mustapha Kemal Pasha riding the storm of domestic ferment and foreign war. In April, 1920, the "Covenant of

the Grand National Assembly" set up at Angora the *de facto* Government of Turkey. In 1921 the Assembly enacted the new Constitution, subsequently amplified by amendment in 1924, which declared that sovereignty belonged to the people, and that all legislative and executive power vested in the Assembly itself as the representative of the people. In 1922 the Assembly deposed the Sultan, abolished the Sultanate and decided that the Caliphate, hitherto held by the Sultan, should be filled by election from the members of the royal House of Osman. A year later, Turkey became a republic; and finally, in March, 1924, the last step in the secularisation of Turkey was taken when the Assembly at Angora abolished the Caliphate.

In Western eyes, the establishment of the Turkish Republic appears the more important of these two events; but the Muslim East was more concerned with the Caliphate and regarded the Turkish

abdication of the hegemony of Islam as an ominous and momentous decision. The motives of the principal actor in the drama, Kemal Pasha himself, filled every orthodox Mussulman with perplexity and dismay: for, his victory over the Greeks, and indeed over the Powers of Europe in 1923, had made him appear as the avenging sword of Islam doing successful battle, as of yore, against the infidel. And yet before the blood of the unbeliever had dried on the blade, the wielder of the avenging sword proclaimed his indifference to the Faith, and, with one stroke, bereft Islam of its visible head. I myself witnessed the immediate effect of Mustapha Kemal's action in India early in 1925. A deputation from the Turkish Red Crescent Society came to India to raise money for the benefit of the repatriated refugees from Macedonia and Thrace. They were received with every assurance of assistance from the Viceroy and the Indian Red Cross Society: and

they set forth from Delhi on their mission. In a very short time they returned in dismay, with empty hands. Wherever they went the Indian Muslims looked at them with distrust as the dethroners of the Caliph of Islam, and closed their doors against them. The deputation returned to Turkey, reflecting sadly upon the consequences of modernity at Angora.

What the other consequences of the Turkish Revolution will be, none can say. Kemal is an able, forceful man, who recreated Turkey after the war and now has his reward in the Presidency of the Turkish Republic. The power of his personality enables him to wield an almost autocratic authority in the new state, despite the democratic provisions of the new Constitution; and not until he passes from the scene will the test of Turkish capacity in self-government be fully applied. The Turks have displayed an aptitude for government in past times, though too often showing a propensity for misgovern-

ment; and now that the Turkish state is practically a homogeneous unit, containing few alien minorities, they may reveal their better nature and settle down to the task of making self-government a reality. They believe themselves to be peculiarly well-endowed for political responsibility; and a Turk once thought to compliment the pre-eminently political English on their success in Government by saying that they were the Turks of the West. From what we know so far of the Turks, it will be a long time before we can say that they are the English of the East.

When we cross the Mediterranean Sea to Egypt we enter a scene very different from that of the Republic of Turkey. The Egyptians have had no independent existence for centuries, nor, until very recent times, any national life worth the name. Napoleon was the first to awaken the country from its slumber of obscurity: Muhammad Ali, the Albanian adventurer, who came within an ace of freeing the

land from the Turk nearly a hundred years ago, was the real father of Egyptian nationalism; and Lord Cromer, as British Agent entrusted with the task of political and economic reconstruction after the suppression of the Arabi Rebellion, was the maker of modern Egypt. The Egyptians themselves were late-comers in the field of their own renascence; and the country owes its present prosperity, its prospects of progress, and whatever capacity for government its people may possess almost entirely to European influence. They have therefore much yet to learn. Till 1914, Egypt was an autonomous province of Turkey governed by the Khedive and his Egyptian ministers, but in fact controlled by the British Government. From 1914 till 1922 it was a British Protectorate, and since 1922 it has been an independent State, ruled by a King and a parliamentary Cabinet, with certain ill-defined obligations to Great Britain in respect of defence, the protec-

tion of minorities, the Suez Canal and the Sudan. It thus enjoys a sovereignty with limitations, but we may observe that the limitations are inherent in the situation and are not such as to hamper the Egyptian in the exercise of political power.

At the end of the War the nationalist movement in Egypt had grown to great proportions. Only ten years before, the Egyptian Government, acting under British advice, had conferred on the people certain powers of self-government for local purposes with the intention of preparing the country "for the ultimate exercise of more responsible functions." Five years later the Constitution of 1913 created a legislature by popular election for the exercise of substantial—but not completely sovereign — political powers. Neither the Khedive, who dreamed at times of making himself an independent autocrat, nor the Egyptian nationalists accepted these reforms with anything but bad grace; and thus the atmosphere in

which they were born was not favourable. But the Great War prevented them from undergoing a fair trial, and when peace came the situation demanded more drastic treatment.

Egypt was in a ferment of embryonic self-determination. The British Government was committed, by its own declarations before the War and by its professions of policy during the War, to far-reaching political changes in all the Asiatic possessions of the Crown. Two days after the Armistice, Zaghlul Pasha presented the Egyptian claim to independence, based more on abstract right than on the proved abilities of the Egyptians themselves. The claim was rejected, and for four years Egypt seethed with political excitement. Within a year of the Armistice the situation had forced itself upon the reluctant notice of the British Prime Minister who sent Lord Milner to Egypt in 1919, with a representative Commission, to enquire on the spot into the causes

of the trouble. The Commission reported that nothing short of self-government would meet the case, and accordingly, but tardily in 1922, the Protectorate was brought to an end and Egypt became an independent sovereign state.

Egyptian independence is, as we have seen, safeguarded against foreign assault and limited by the presence of the British High Commissioner as the protector of foreign minorities and the controller of the army; but the international recognition of the new status of the country is the all-important factor, and from our present point of view the democratic form of that status is the most significant. Egypt has joined the ranks of the new Asia and must rely henceforth on the general sense of the many and no longer on the presumed wisdom of the few. The Egyptian experiment in responsible government will be watched by Western observers with an anxious and critical interest; for here it is conducted on a scale large enough and

with provisions of autonomy wide enough to supply trustworthy evidence of the adaptability, or conversely, of the incompatibility, of democratic institutions in the East.

Turning eastwards and leaving Arabia to the south and Palestine to the north, both of them alluring foci of modern ferment, we take Persia as our third object lesson in Asiatic change. Persia, like Turkey and Egypt, has deserted Asian tradition for European novelty and, in the fond belief of her most ardent patriots, stands on the threshold of a new age of glory. Her past history presents interesting contrasts to Turkey and Egypt. Whereas Turkey, under the House of Osman, has been reckoned as one of the Powers of the World throughout the whole of modern history and owed her place to her own energies, if also to the divisions among her enemies; and whereas Egypt has not for five centuries—some would say twenty-five—played any effective part

of her own in Mediterranean or Asiatic politics, Persia has risen and fallen, not once, but at least four times in recorded history. The names of Cyrus, Darius, Xerxes and Artaxerxes before Christ; the revival of Persian power under Ardeshir in the third century A.D. which lasted four hundred years; the renewal of that power in the sixteenth century, after eight hundred years of comparative impotence, by the Lefavi dynasty, with its culmination in the conquests of Afghanistan and the sack of Delhi by Nadir Shah who was assassinated in 1747: these are the landmarks which bear witness to great fluctuations of Persian fortunes, and also to some inherent power of recovery in her. And four years ago Riza Khan showed that the power was not exhausted.

Till 1908 the Shah of Persia was absolute ruler of his people, and the form of his government resembled that of Turkey. In that year he was compelled by popular clamour to promulgate a Consti-

tution of which the new legislature, called the National Assembly, was the chief innovation. The Assembly did not at first possess the full powers of a democratic House, but the Shah's frequent absence in Europe helped to increase its importance, and eventually it became the lever by which Riza Khan, already virtual military dictator of the country, rose to supreme power in 1921. In October, 1925, the Assembly deposed the Shah and brought the Kajar dynasty to an end by making Riza Khan himself head of the government. The word Republic had not yet been spoken, though Riza Khan contemplated a republican revolution in 1924 and only desisted when he was told by the learned men of Islam—the Shiah Ulema—that there was no authority for a Republic in the Koran. Finally, in April, 1926, Riza Khan was crowned Shah of Persia in Teheran. The revolutionary wheel had come full circle.

For the moment, therefore, Persia lives

under the dictatorship of a powerful adventurer, sanctioned by the deliberate will of an elected House. The roots of Persian democracy still lie in shallow soil; its flowering may easily be blighted by Soviet Russian intrigue or invasion; and Riza Khan cannot rely on those qualities which make the Anatolian peasant a source of strength to Mustapha Kemal nor upon the active co-operation of the same number of able and intelligent men. His is therefore a personal revolution to a greater degree than Mustapha Kemal's; though it would be untrue to say that the Persia of to-day is entirely of his making. The Mejliss was born by popular demand out of dynastic weakness, and had successfully encroached on the royal power for half a generation before Riza Khan emerged from the ranks of the Cossack Brigade to give virility to Persian Reform. He is, none the less, a portent from Persia in the great unfolding panorama of the new Asia.

If the dawn of a new era has broken in Angora, Cairo, and Teheran, its first rays are visible also in Kabul. The Amir Amanullah is the constitutional monarch of a land which has one foot in the civilised world and one in the Asia of ancient tradition. There is not one yard of railway in the country nor does the government belong to the International Postal Union. These are the most obvious symptoms of the deeply backward nature of Afghanistan which the Amir and the Young Afghans are striving to change; and although a State Council and a Legislative Assembly were created in 1922, assassination is still commoner than political argument.

The signs of change are to be seen in the Constitution of 1922, in the free provision of compulsory education, in the endeavour to develop the scanty economic resources of the country, and in the deliberate effort for the first time to establish political and commercial relations

with foreign countries. The Amir realises that he can only fertilise the resources of his country by contact with other nations, especially of the West; and though he looks upon Great Britain with the eye of doubt, and upon Soviet Russia with apprehension, he has overcome much of the traditional Afghan prejudice against the foreigner and has enlisted foreign experts in the enterprise of modernising the country. The vicious circle of popular ignorance and economic poverty prevents the Afghan from escaping into higher spheres and leaves him the pursuit of war as his only pastime. Modernity will thus be slow of growth in Afghanistan; but its seed has been planted and it will grow.

Passing over British India for the moment, we may take a glance at the independent kingdom of Siam as presenting the nearest semblance of a genuine autocracy to be found in civilised Asia. Here, the King, not ineffectively aided by

the Princes of the Royal House, rules as well as reigns. His Ministry, appointed by his own decree, is responsible to him alone; and though there exists a legislative body which prepares some of the laws, it is not representative and its labours have no validity except by his signature. There is as yet but little evidence of political agitation, and the young Siamese who goes to Europe for education remains remarkably free from that political infection with Western democratic theory which is so evident in the Egyptian, the Turk and the British Indian. The Siamese Princes, with whom I conversed in these matters in 1925, expressed the opinion that the growth of a political class would be slow, and that if the dynasty took wise decisions to forestall any possible popular demand for democracy there would be no catastrophic revolution in Siam. To be sure, government in Siam is no very profound exercise in statecraft, and the European, judging it by his own

standard, is prone to find apt quotations from the operas of Gilbert and Sullivan, to apply to it; but it *is government* none the less, and the part played in it by various members of the Royal House has sustained and nourished the natural reverence of the people for the monarchy. Personal rule is congenial to the Siamese, as to most Asiatics, and unles the growth of education stimulates a great increase in popular interest in politics, there is reason to believe that the Siamese Monarchy, in much its present form, will endure for many years to come.

Twenty years ago the same expectation was widely held of the Manchu Dynasty in China; for though there were many signs of decay in the *Ta Ch'ing Ch'ao*, the Great Immaculate Dynasty, as it was called, and though domestic corruption and a spineless foreign policy had awakened popular discontent, the idea of a Republic was known only to a few as a possible alternative. Nevertheless, late

in 1911 anti-dynastic riots broke out and grew in a week or two to the magnitude of Revolution: early in 1912 the Manchu Dynasty fell: and in a night Imperial China, the most ancient monarchy in the world, became a Republic. That the Chinese people was unprepared for so radical a change was self-evident and is still the most patent fact in the Far East: that the Republican leaders themselves hardly knew what they were doing is probable: and that the first President of the new Republic, Yuan Shih Kai, who had served a long apprenticeship in statecraft under the last Manchu Emperors, knew that his fellow-countrymen were not republicans is certain. Yuan's enemies say that he was as faithless as Republican President as he had been as Imperial Minister, and that only his death in 1916 prevented him from renewing his endeavour of 1915 to make himself Emperor. But Yuan was at least consistent, for in a speech delivered before the fall of the dynasty he

said "I doubt whether the people of China are at present ripe for a Republic. . . . The adoption of a limited monarchy would bring conditions back to the normal, and would bring stability much more rapidly than that end could be attained through any experimental form of government unsuited to the genius of the people or to the present conditions of China." He therefore pled for the retention of the Emperor.

Was Yuan speaking without the book? The whole history of China answers, No! The conception of representative and responsible government, on a national scale, finds no place in Chinese thought throughout the centuries. How much less then could the Republicans expect to create republican institutions overnight with any hope of success. It is significant that the Revolution of 1911-1912 followed the course of each successive Chinese revolution during the twenty centuries of her known history down to the point

where Sun Yat Sen and the Cantonese Revolutionaries, speaking the alien political accents of Europe, hoisted the Republican flag south of the Yangtze River. There have been many revolutions, and many fallen Emperors; but until to-day *Le roi est mort, vive le roi* was the battle-cry of the reformers: only to-day for the first time is it *Vive la République.*

The Republican Constitution of 1912 set up two legislative chambers, with a President and a Parliamentary Cabinet; but from the first it lacked that power at the centre without which no country can survive, least of all China. This defect only became completely visible when Yuan died in 1916, for as long as he was President he ruled much like the dispossessed dynasty, corrupting Parliament when he could, and overriding it when he couldn't. On his death the chaos which he feared broke out and has prevailed ever since. The Peking Government has wielded no authority over China

for the last ten years, and the country has fallen into the hands of the military governors of the provinces, the Tu-Chuns, whose sporadic but comparatively bloodless warfare has brought government altogether to a standstill. Disorder has, however, been by no means universal: the normal life of China has continued as before: the revenue from import duties—always a good index of the economic life of a country—has actually increased during this period of chaos, and many Chinese probably hardly realise that half-a-dozen civil wars have been waged around them during the last few years.

The explanation of this extraordinary anomaly lies in several causes. The size of the country helps to account for the meagre disturbance created by local feuds between the Tu-Chuns: the half-hearted campaigning in these little civil wars left even the areas of conflict comparatively quiet; and the fact, most significant of all, that at the best or at the worst, the Chi-

nese have never required much government, explains their slowness to perceive the change when government ceases to function altogether.

This quality in the Chinese has its good and evil sides. It reveals itself in their law-abiding character and in an almost complete absence of national public spirit. It is true that at times public opinion has been a force in China, as foreign boycotts have shown, but whatever sense of nationality they possess—and even the Chinese themselves sometimes doubt the existence of it—has found little expression in a concern for measures or ideas of national scope. Since the beginning of time, we may almost say, government has been provided for them, and the concerns of national administration seemed beyond the range of their normal vision. The scope of their vision, indeed, would seem to be limited to the nearer objects: the family, the craft they practise, the city they inhabit: and it is doubtful whether

the word *China* connotes to them either the geographical area, or the community of interests and culture, or the allegiance to a common flag or throne, which the name of any European country conjures up before its citizens. The family is actually the most powerful factor in Chinese life; and the strength of family feeling, with its culmination in ancestor worship, hinders the growth of patriotism or the development of a civic spirit on a large scale. There is a story of Confucius which gives point to the case. A Chinese nobleman, in the days of Chinese feudalism, said to Confucius that the moral state of his part of the country was so high that if a father stole a sheep his son would give evidence against him. "Ah," replied the sage, "we think otherwise in my part of the country: for whatever the father may do, the son will shield him, and in like manner the father will shield the son. There is true integrity."

Now filial piety implied also reverence

for the person of the Emperor who enjoyed a divine right as long as he governed the land well; but it did not protect the Emperor from the consequence of misgovernment. His divine right was conditional and died when wrongly employed. It might seem that a people capable of taking so eminently secular a view of the royal person would have made some political progress from so auspicious a commencement. Once you have made the power of the throne conditional on its good behaviour you have taken a long stride from political apathy to political ambition; and you may be expected to develop rapidly a system of control over the caprice of the autocrat hinged on the power of the popular will. But no such phenomenon ever appeared in China. The political common sense which hedged the divine right of kings with conditions stopped there: and the Chinese People, for twenty centuries, remained content with autocracy tempered by abdication.

The Republic therefore found them unprepared: and to prepare oneself for an overwhelming novelty *after* the novelty itself has come is notoriously difficult. The Chinese must do it or retrace their steps: and it can only be done if the essential powers of the central government—defence, railways, customs and foreign affairs—are entrusted to some powerful agency, whom we may call a republican dictator, for a long period during which the local governments of the provinces, linked in a federal system, may have time to establish themselves unchallenged as democracies *à la Chinoise*. This might lead to the restoration of the Empire; but would that be a misfortune for China?

Let us note here, before leaving China, that if representative government may seem exotic, the democratic spirit is not: and what China suffers from to-day is not the medicine itself, but an over-dose of democracy in a western prescription. China, in former times, proved that a na-

tion may be democratic without democratic institutions. China, in our day, has proved that political democracy is a special condition requiring qualities which the Chinese do not possess. China, in the future, has to prove that these qualities when they are not innate can be acquired.

We can but await the answer with a kind of sceptical hope.

The Japanese Revolution of 1867 followed a very different course. It was not, in fact, a revolution, but a Restoration with a conservative and dynastic purpose to take the place of the democratic motive which usually animates similar movements. For six hundred years the dynnasty of the present Emperor, whom we poetically call the Mikado, was eclipsed by the Shogun without being actually deposed; and the superstitious regard for his person which we associate with the modern Japanese attitude to the dynasty was unknown. Political control had re-

mained in the Tokugawa clan for two centuries when the Satsuma and Choshu clans in 1867 overthrew it, restored the Mikado, abolished feudalism and launched Japan on her modern career. The Meiji era thus has two origins and two results. It is modern in its instruments, in its pursuits of Western science and its imitation of Western methods; it is more ancient than antiquity itself in its ambition to make Japan a power in the world and in its revival of the worship of the Emperor as the central feature in the State religion of Shintoism.

We are accustomed to marvel at the resilience which has enabled Japan, at one bound, to leap the chasm between mediæval and modern civilisation; but in so doing, we may lose sight of the other and greater wonder, namely, that the reactionary will of far-sighted men could so impose itself on a whole people as to lead them to practise the astounding anachronism of Emperor-Worship within

the compass of an apparently constitutional monarchy. Shintoism, as professed in modern Japan, is the deliberate re-creation, *pour raison d'état,* of a very old popular religion now transformed and wholly designed to concentrate both the patriotism and the religious feeling of the Japanese upon the person of the Emperor as the physical and spiritual embodiment of the whole nation.

A moment ago I spoke of Japan as an apparently constitutional monarchy, which brings us to the political aspect of her life; and we shall understand the word constitutional when we have seen the nature of the Constitution. Promulgated by Imperial Decree in 1889—and owing nothing to popular influence—the Constitution provides that "the Empire of Japan shall be reigned over and governed by a line of Emperors unbroken for ages eternal." The Mikado reigns by divine right without the limit which we have seen imposed in China, and, despite the exist-

ence of a legislature, without so far relinquishing the whole imperial power to bodies of his own creation. The actual exercise of the Imperial power, however, requires careful description. Constitutionally unlimited and theoretically residing in the Emperor himself, political power at first belonged to the Elder Statesmen—the Genro—whose once supreme authority has, however, gradually been impaired by the death of the Genro themselves, and by the slow encroachment of the Cabinet. The Elder Statesmen made modern Japan and ruled it for the first generation of its existence. They nursed its industries, created its army and navy, guided its policy of expansion, and could claim after thirty years that the Japan of their designs in 1867 was the Japan of victorious reality when Russia had to accept defeat at her hands. Rarely has achievement so faithfully reflected its originating conception.

Japan is thus, in theory, a constitu-

tional autocracy; in practice a military oligarchy; and only in the promise of the future, a democracy. The significant feature in her modern history is her preservation of the traditional principle of autocracy as the pivot of the Constitution. In preparing herself to compete with the rest of the modern world she imported the methods and instruments of scientific progress, but excluded, as far as she could, the politics of Europe, moulding her Constitution on the model of Imperial Germany. She has thus escaped the catastrophic rupture of ancient custom which has brought chaos in its train in other Asiatic countries; and if she can pursue steadily the course of political development which has brought her to such prominence, she may yet become the supreme object lesson for all Asiatic peoples. She is only midway on that course, and her domestic condition is too unstable to justify any confident prediction of her future. That she has proved her title to be re-

garded as one of the Great Powers is self-evident; that her people possess many of the qualities, both moral and physical, which go to make a great nation is also true; but she has yet to prove that she can elevate an economic proletariat to the standing of a responsible electorate.

New forces, emerging from the industrial life of the country, threaten the equilibrium of her constitutional imperialism, and Emperor and oligarchs alike know that a day may come when they must choose between revolution and that evolution in which they will share more power with their own people. The practical realism hitherto shown by Japanese statesmen will probably open their eyes to the lesson of the fate of German Imperialism, both at home and abroad, and will prompt them to make terms with the masses before it is too late. For our part, let us observe the weakness as well as the strength of modern Japan; and, in estimating the nature of that phenomenon

which is called "The Yellow Peril," preserve a cool judgment accordingly.

The survey of modern Asia which we have just made reveals the unchanging East in the throes of change. Tradition has been overthrown, and in form at least, a new Asia arises on the ashes of the old. Is it indeed a new Asia? Is it more than a passing fever due to the alien virus of Western ideas? Who shall say? In no Asiatic country has the process been at work long enough to give clear results. In some, dictators have merely taken the place of the deposed monarchs; in others, chaos is the only visible result of democracy; and in none has the new era any firm foundation in the habits and character of the people. The political novelty, in most cases an exotic importation, is still unstable; and if political change had been the only new feature in this new Asia, we should be justified in regarding it as a temporary aberration from established ways. But it does not stand alone.

Education of the people accompanies and strengthens it: the emancipation of women shows that it has a social counterpart of great significance: and the economic development of all countries in which it has taken place has already made wide breaches in ancient custom.

And so, if we may not yet proclaim the passing of the old order, we must acknowledge that Asia has a vision of the new.

III

INDIA IN TRANSITION

In our bird's-eye view of the political panorama of Asia we made no attempt to observe the nature of modern change in India. We reserved India for a more detailed account because there the political experiment is being conducted by an Asiatic people in partnership with the most experienced political nation in the world, because it is an experiment which proceeds according to a deliberate design with well marked stages, and finally because I know it as one who has taken part in it. The Indian experiment in democratic government has, moreover, been in progress long enough to justify a more detailed account of it than I have given of any of the other Asiatic constitutions;

and the special conditions in which it is being conducted make it both instructive and significant. The account which I give in this chapter is based mainly on personal observation during the first five critical years of the life of the Government of India Act (1919), which is the principal constitutional statute for India.

When England first went to India she had no thought of governing the country, and the only political authority entrusted to the East India Company, by its Royal Charters, was confined to the police power necessary to protect English trade. The Company itself was devoted to commerce, spiced with adventure; and only with reluctance and misgiving did it confess that the successful pursuit of profit was transforming it from a trader into a ruler. Within one hundred years of its creation it had acquired large territories and assumed corresponding responsibilities in Bengal, Madras and Bombay; and before the end of the Eighteenth Century it had

grown to the stature of an *imperium in imperio* so imposing that the British Government had to prescribe and circumscribe the limits of its action. In successive Acts of Parliament, the Governments of Lord North and of Pitt deprived the Company of some of its political powers, including the grant of concessions in new territory, and thus inaugurated the process by which eventually the Crown became the supreme authority throughout the Indian Peninsula. Our historian, George Macaulay Trevelyan, whose works are one of the glories of contemporary English prose, ascribes to Pitt's action the source of Scottish ascendancy in the business houses of Calcutta. When Pitt consented to lend money to the East India Company he took the control of patronage and of concessions granted in India. These valuable rights were then given to the wealthy baillies of Glasgow and Dundee as a consideration in return for which they undertook to

support Pitt's Government in Parliament. These prosperous Scots sent their sons and nephews to Bengal to exploit the new concessions; and their grandsons, great grandsons and further descendants are there to this day to the no small benefit alike of Bengal and of Scotland.

Once the British Government had put its hand to the plough there could be no turning back. Insensibly, and without that subtle and far-reaching premeditation which foreign critics are wont to ascribe to British statesmen, with such erroneous flattery, England was drawn step by step and ever deeper into her Indian responsibilities, though for long she continued to share them with the East India Company. Finally in 1858 the Imperial Government banished the Company from politics after the Indian Mutiny and assumed full charge of the Indian Empire. The proclamation by which Queen Victoria became the acknowledged

ruler of India declared the purpose of England as follows:—

"Firmly relying ourselves on the truth of Christianity, and acknowledging with gratitude the solace of religion, we disclaim alike the right and the desire to impose our convictions on any of our subjects. We declare it to be our royal will and pleasure that none be in any wise favoured, none molested or disquieted, by reason of their religious faith or observances, but that all shall alike enjoy the equal and impartial protection of the law; and we do strictly charge and enjoin all those who may be in authority under us that they abstain from all interference with the religious belief or worship of any of our subjects on pain of our highest displeasure.

"And it is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to office in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their

education, ability, and integrity duly to discharge.

"We know, and respect, the feeling of attachment with which the natives of India regard the lands inherited by them from their ancestors, and we desire to protect them in all rights connected therewith, subject to the equitable demands of the State; and we will that generally, in framing and administering the law, due regard be paid to the ancient rights, usages and customs of India."

Hitherto no such comprehensive and authoritative declaration of policy had ever been made by the British Government; and this Proclamation may be taken as the considered confession of faith by responsible statesmen. It pledged England to give India good government, justice and progress; it opened for Indians the door to political employment in their own country; but it said no word of democracy or of a form of Indian Government responsible to any authority but the

Crown and the Imperial Parliament. Political India as we know it still lay in the womb of time.

Meanwhile, a quarter of a century before, an Englishman had written an official minute which was destined to influence profoundly the growth of India. The historian, Macaulay, became Law Member of the Government of India in 1834. He laid his mark deep upon the law of India, in the legal codes which he drew up; but, in his memorandum on the use of the English language, he set in motion forces of greater scope and may be regarded as the first, albeit unwitting, parent of the political movements of modern India. Proceeding from the assumption that no Indian vernacular could express the thoughts of science, philosophy or economics, he denounced as waste of time the attempt to give a modern education through the medium of any of the native languages and demanded the adoption of English as the universal language

of instruction. Educated Indians themselves accepted his dogma and assisted the Government in launching their country on an educational course which was destined to carry successive generations of young Indians away from the traditional and congenial atmosphere of their parentage into the exotic realms of Western thought. Macaulay conceived himself as the opener of new gates of Indian progress and forgot that *coelum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt.* Had he taken a more comprehensive view of the needs of India, he would have encouraged the development of the vernacular, as his wiser successors did in the case of Bengali, and limited the application of all that was true in his own doctrine to its proper sphere. As it was his indiscriminate invitation to drink deep of western thought was widely accepted in the years that followed, and by the end of the century tens of thousands of young Indians had imbibed to excess the strong waters

of the West. The political ferment of modern India began thus in Macaulay's ink-pot.

Many years had to pass, however, before the influence of this revolution revealed itself in politics. As we have seen, there was no political nationalism in India at the time of the Mutiny; and though that rebellion has sometimes been interpreted as a revolt of the awakening Indian against his Western master, it was not a widespread popular movement of a *conscious* kind. Indeed, the dawn of Indian political consciousness was not seen for nearly a quarter of a century afterwards; and when it came in the creation of the Indian National Congress in 1885, its heralds were Englishmen, as well as Indians. When Allan Octavian Hume drafted the resolutions of the first Indian National Congress in that year, he was an alien pioneer showing his Indian fellow-subjects the English road to political power; and the Congress, which he in-

spired, represented only the nascent nationalism sharpened by political discontent of a comparatively small class of educated Indians. So meagre was the power of the Congress in its own country that it exercised but little influence over the course of Indian policy or the character of the Indian Constitution. The legislative bodies were little more than consultative committees attached to the executive government, and the number of Indians holding responsible posts was small.

We need not tarry long, therefore, over the period of half a century that lay between the Indian Mutiny and the reform of Indian Government in 1909, which is usually associated with the name of Lord Morley, better known as John Morley, who was then Secretary of State for India in London. These fifty years witnessed great economic changes accompanied by the growth of a conscious political opinion, and prepared the stage for the actors now performing upon it. It was a period

of comparative calm which was only broken by agitation and outrage in the last years of the nineteenth century, and the first decade of the twentieth. Lord Morley's Act bore witness, in two of its principal provisions, to the change which had come over the Indian scene since 1858. It increased the scope and membership of the Legislative Councils and threw open the Viceroy's Executive Council—the Indian counterpart of the British Cabinet—to Indians for the first time. Lord Morley was careful to disclaim any intention to set up an Indian Parliament or to introduce any element of responsible government in the Indian Administration; but his enlarged Councils gave the native Indian politician a wider arena of debate and a more effective sounding-board for his nationalist propaganda than he had hitherto possessed. Concessions were thus made in 1909 to the new Indian nationalism, but the central structure of autocracy remained intact.

Ten years later the Constitution was again revised; and the changes wrought by it were so substantial as to amount to a constitutional revolution. At its inauguration in 1921, Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy, declared that the new Act signalized the abdication of autocracy and the inauguration of political co-operation between Indians and Englishmen on a scale hitherto unknown. It is to this Constitution that we now turn our attention for a while.

The Great War had not lasted more than eighteen months when the Government of India sought from the British Government a new declaration of policy. England's purpose in India had not been defined since Queen Victoria made her Proclamation in 1858, and the two Governments felt that the time had come to give the Indian subjects of the Crown explicit pledges of our intention. After long consultation, the Secretary of State, speaking as the mouthpiece of His Maj-

esty's Government, made the following solemn declaration of policy:—

> ". . . The increasing association of Indians in every branch of the Administration, and the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire."

This represented the combined judgment of a Ministry composed of men as widely sundered in temperament and experience as Mr. Lloyd George, Lord Curzon and Mr. Montagu. It must, therefore, be taken as a national pledge of a more binding character than any England had given to India since the generous proclamation of Queen Victoria sixty years before. It marks a turning point in the history of the British Empire, as in the relations of Britain and India. Hitherto, the development of political institu-

tions in India had been more or less haphazard, each reform being designed to serve the exigencies of a given situation: with but one guiding principle, namely, the preservation of the complete sovereignty of the Imperial Parliament over India. In terms of the law of the constitution this sovereignty is still intact, though the powers now given to the Indian legislative bodies are so considerable that, in practice, India enjoys greater political autonomy than she does in theory. Moreover, the goal set before India is that of responsible government within the Empire, and the mere statement of that aim in itself gives India a new and higher status in the comity of nations; while her position in the League of Nations is an even better proof of her progress towards true nationhood. We shall see as we unfold the panorama of Indian politics that there are many obstacles to be overcome before India can reap the full benefits of an adult status; but, for

all that, India has now the opportunity, never offered before, of proving that she can govern herself. The past five years are the first stages in the process of proof.

Each Asiatic nation, now embarking on the difficult enterprise of popular government, provides its own object lesson for the spectator, but none of them presents a study so instructive as India. Let us therefore examine first the structure of Indian Government and then observe the forces which operate in the political life of the country.

Supreme, in constitutional law, though voluntarily limiting the political action of its sovereignty, is the Crown, represented by the Imperial Parliament to whom the Secretary of State for India is responsible. Next below comes the Governor-General-in-Council, who is the Government of India. This body consists of the Viceroy, the Commander-in-Chief in India, and six civil members of Council in charge of different departments of the Administration.

The Indian Legislature consists of two chambers, the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly, and laws are ordinarily enacted by the Viceroy and these two chambers on the analogy of the King, Lords and Commons of England. In the Legislative Assembly the elected Indian members have the majority, the minority being composed mainly of official members nominated by the Governor-General. In the Council of State, which is the smaller and longer-lived body, officials and non-officials are approximately equal in number. There is no element of responsibility in the Indian Legislature; but all measures, including the Budget, must be submitted to the vote of the Legislative Assembly. Only in exceptional cases may the Governor-General veto legislation or pass any measure over the heads of the Legislature.

You will remember that the declaration made by His Majesty's Government in August, 1917, contained the phrase "the

gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India, as an integral part of the British Empire." The problem which then confronted the framers of the new Act was to give Indians enlarged opportunities in the administration of their own country by which they might acquire experience and develop a sense of responsibility. The Government decided to make the first step in the Provinces, of which there are nine, each with a subordinate government of its own. For this purpose they set up the system known as "Diarchy," under which the Government of each Province is divided into two sections. At the head of the Province is the Governor. Under him, Executive Councillors nominated by the Crown and responsible to the Governor alone, take charge of Finance, Land Revenue, Law and Order. These are the Reserved Subjects. The other half of the Government is called

the Governor - acting - with - Ministers. These Ministers are Indians and are chosen from the ranks of the Legislative Council, a single-chamber body composed of a majority of Indians. They are responsible to that Council (like Cabinet Ministers in England) for the administration of the Transferred Subjects which are Education, Public Health, Local Self-Government and some others.

This device, invented by Mr. Lionel Curtis, gives the appearance of a house divided against itself and was widely condemned as unworkable when it was first proposed. But the proof of the pudding has shown that, despite obvious defects, it can be made to work; and, since 1920, it has achieved a fair measure of success in at least six out of nine Indian Provinces. It has no element of permanence in it, for it is but a bridge to carry India over the difficult passage from autocracy to popular government. Its enemies point to its complete breakdown in Ben-

gal, its apologists to success in Madras and Bombay, and draw their respective conclusions accordingly. The truth is that the time has not yet come to draw any conclusions; and, therefore, I propose to refrain from pronouncing judgment and to offer you instead a picture of the scene in which the new Constitution has played its part and of the kaleidoscopic events which have filled the last five years in India with zest and color.

It cannot be said that the omens were auspicious when the new Constitution was launched in the winter of 1920-1921. You have but to cast your minds back to that turbulent time to see in memory the unchained forces that were troubling a world already weary with war. Revolution had swept away many old landmarks: insolvency threatened all but the most stable governments: and the moral restraints which once seemed to us eternal were loosened. India was not immune from these disturbing forces. Public

opinion was excited, suspicious, and unstable. The ashes of rebellion in the Punjab were still hot: the air was full of rumours: the good faith of the Government was denied: and when the first election was held under the new Act, intimidation stalked abroad and prevented millions of voters from going to the polls. The Constitution seemed almost under the shadow of death at its very birth. By the patience, fortitude and forbearance of the Government, and equally by the courage and faith of the more sober section of Indian politicians, who believed that England would stand by her pledged word, the Constitution survived. The storms assailing it gradually subsided: the fog of distrust lifted: and to-day peace reigns where uproar once prevailed. But in India peace is rarely more than an armistice; and as long as the Constitution retains its present unstable and transitional character, no party in India will settle down to constructive work. Every

Indian patriot puts the status of India first, and all else is secondary. Many recognise that her position in the world has greatly improved, and that she is rising to the dignity of an equal partnership in the British Empire. That she is a member of the League of Nations: that she ranks eighth among the industrial peoples of the world: that her art, her philosophy and her religion are daily winning the more serious attention of the West: these things are acknowledged and prized. But politics comes first; and the all-absorbing thought of the Indian is to be master in his own house, with a government responsible to him as it is in the democratic countries of the West.

Let us remind ourselves, however, that political India is but a fraction of the whole. Of her three hundred and fifteen million people only a mere handful are politicians, and the total electorate does not amount to more than three per cent. of the population. It is therefore only of

this fraction that we speak when we say that politics comes first. From this source many consequences flow. To it is due much of the sense of unreality which pervades Indian politics; for men judge events and measures, not on their intrinsic merits, but solely as they hinder or hasten the progress of the land towards self-government. All Indian political parties are chaotic and unstable for this reason, though also because the conception of team-work is almost unknown in India. They represent unreal divisions because the constitutional question overshadows all other political problems and prevents the formation of parties along lines of genuine political and economic cleavage. We need go no further than the political conventions held in 1923 and 1924 in Delhi, for proof of the fact that when Indians assemble to make a political programme, their proceedings are devoted entirely to such questions as the relation of the Government of India to the Secre-

tary of State in London, or whether the Legislative Assembly should be given the responsibility for army policy.

When we speak of Indian parties, however, we must remember that party politics as practised in Britain and America is unknown in India. There are a number of loosely strung organisations that call themselves parties, but the lines of cleavage are indistinct, and in most cases unreal. This is partly due to the character of the present Constitution, and partly to the prevailing incapacity of the Indian for large-scale organization. The General Election of 1923 awakened the interest of the average educated Indian in the names and programmes of parties; but his choice of a political home is nearly always dictated rather by accidental personal influences than by any definite choice of principle, with the probable exception that the Swaraj party—ex-Non-Co-operators from Mr. Gandhi's movement—possesses the attraction of the big

unit for the small, by its mass and momentum.

In other lands where the science of politics is more widely studied and the art of politics more effectively practised, the people tend naturally to fall into substantial groups representing definite conflicts of social or economic interests. India is full of such conflicts, but the present character of the Government of India and the prevailing irresponsible nature of the Indian Legislatures, both Provincial and Central, tend to throw all the native Indian political groups into a somewhat heterogeneous alliance of opposition against the Government. The main line of cleavage is, therefore, racial; and though the feuds that rage between Hindu and Mussulman, between Brahmin and non-Brahmin, sometimes reach a climax of the fiercest intensity, neither of them has made its mark as clearly upon the proceedings of the Legislatures during the last three years as the inevitable cleavage

between the Indian and the European in India. And this must be so as long as it appears to the Indian that, in all matters vital to his country, the last word of decision rests, not with himself or with his fellow-countrymen, but with the Imperial Parliament in London and its servant, the Government of India in Simla, neither of which, he claims, can really understand the needs of his motherland. Western education has awakened him to his own needs, both political, economic, and social, and has armed him with arguments and precedents to prove that peoples should govern themselves.

The presence, therefore, of those who are not Indians at the seat of power in India explains the apparently artificial alignment of Indian parties. It would be waste of time to describe in alphabetical series the many groups and sects that have moved across the Indian political stage; but a brief record of the parties and personalities engaged in the election of 1923

may be given as an introduction to the situation which has arisen since.

Setting aside the innumerable political sects which so variegated a country as India must always produce, we may say that the mind of India to-day falls into three parts.

The extreme left or revolutionary wing is held by the Non-Co-operation Party, in which Gandhi is now the only outstanding personality. This party, almost all-powerful five years ago, itself largely the creation of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi's strange and striking personality, has undergone a serious decline, amounting almost to paralysis. When Gandhi went to prison in 1923 no one appeared to carry his mantle. The chief organ of Non-Cooperation, the Indian National Congress—ironically enough under the leadership of those who were professedly Gandhi's most devoted lieutenants a few months before—publicly threw Gandhi overboard, and has since been engaged in

maintaining an elaborate pretence of unity where everyone knows that the organisation is rent with personal jealousy and political dissension from top to bottom. If Non-Cooperation is to be restored as a revolutionary force in India, it must purge itself of its elements of conflict and find an effective program. There is no sign of its being able to do either.

The second Indian party represented a new element, and may be called the party of the White Sheet. It bears the name of Swaraj, which is, perhaps, the most comprehensive shibboleth ever devised to enable people who disagree to pretend that they do not. Literally interpreted the word means "self-rule" or "home-rule." Five years ago Gandhi announced it as the war-cry of Non-Cooperation, and wisely refused to define it, though occasionally he gave half a dozen definitions from which you could choose which you liked best. To-day it is the name borne by the party led till the day of his death, in

1925, by C. R. Das, of Bengal, a politician who had enough intelligence to realise that Gandhi's old program was politically impossible, and that no leader could embark on the course of Non-Cooperation which Gandhi marked out for himself without deliberately realising that it must lead to bloodshed and revolution. C. R. Das did not want revolution but played with it. Knowing that, in the circumstances, Indian home rule is to be won neither by Gandhi's passive resistance nor by Irish methods, he screwed up his courage to declare publicly that the road to self-government lay through the political institutions set up by Government of India Act of 1919. This declaration represented a shrewd estimate of present-day political values in India, and at the same time it was perhaps the most abject capitulation that a public man ever made. In a word, the C. R. Das of 1923 convicted the C. R. Das of 1920 as a short-sighted blunderer.

The Swaraj Party, first under C. R. Das and now under Pandit Motilal Nehru (of Allahabad), therefore represented the dawn of sanity in the ranks of Indian revolutionaries. It must not be supposed that this statement means that anarchical conspiracy and the like do not still rumble underground and may not still break into the open; but it is justified because the greater part of those who were the brains of the revolutionary conspiracy in Bengal and elsewhere, earlier in the present century, have now definitely forsworn the bomb and the dagger and have chosen the path of constitutional reform.

The third party is to be found in the National Liberal Federation of India, a substantial but not too well organised body of educated political opinion which during the three years 1921 to 1923 was well represented in the Legislative Councils of the Provinces, and in the Legislative Assembly and Council of State at Delhi. To the courage of those who

called themselves "Liberals" is due the fact that the new Constitution launched in 1921 has had any chance of life at all. These men co-operated with the Government to inaugurate and establish the new Legislatures; and if these bodies weathered the storms of the first three years, the National Liberal Federation and the Government of India may share the credit between them. It would be too much to say that this Federation represents the right wing of Indian politics; and yet, in contrast to the revolutionaries of Non-Cooperation, the Federationists ought rather to be called the "Conservatives" than the "Liberals" of India. Yet this, too, would be misleading, for they are progressive in many senses of the word; and probably for some time to come India will have to look to the personalities of the Federation for her ministers and her administrators.

The broad lines of political division in India are set out above, undisturbed by

all the confusing little by-paths and cross-roads that lead nowhere in particular. Anyone who obtains a clear view of the three forces briefly described above and bears in mind the fact that the anonymous entity called "Government" is still the greatest power in India and therefore to be reckoned among her effective political forces, will understand something of the present situation—a situation in transition—and in order to simplify the presentation, eliminate from the picture irrelevant and confusing detail.

Let me retrace the steps of this argument for the moment to examine a little more closely the origin and present plight of the Non-Cooperation movement. Though it may be said to be but one more manifestation of Indian unrest, like the Swadeshi and Bengal Partition agitations of former years, it presented a somewhat different character from them. It was born in the general ferment of "self-determination" during the war, but it

might never have assumed the menacing aspect of 1920 had it not been for a series of internal events in India which provoked popular feeling. The story of the enactment of certain measures necessary for the defence of India during the war, and of their re-enactment in part after the war, is too long to be told here. Broadly speaking, however, what happened was that the Government of India, forseeing that it would be deprived of those special powers which the Defence of the Realm Act gave it for the purposes of war, decided to re-enact, for a time at all events, some of the more essential powers. The Indian counterpart of the British Defence of the Realm Act was due to come to an end six months after the end of the war. Now, in 1919 no one could have foreseen that the official date for the end of the war, that is, for legal and constitutional purposes, would be the autumn of 1921. Hence the apparent need for the enactment of special legislation to deal with the dis-

turbed state not only of India but of the rest of the world in 1919-20. Indeed, the Government of India was justified by the report of a Committee specially appointed to examine the need for legislation of this kind. This Committee, presided over by Mr. Justice Rowlatt and almost entirely judicial in composition, reported that the continuance of certain emergency powers was necessary. Hence the famous Rowlatt Act. Its passage through the Legislature was made the signal for a prolonged outburst of feeling; and once it became an act, it was magnified and distorted by the less responsible leaders of popular opinion into an engine of torture. The irony of the situation, as we look back on it now, is that the act was never put into operation, though its presence on the Statute Book very nearly wrecked the new Indian Constitution at the very moment of its launching.

At this time Mr. Gandhi held the key to the position. He was at first disposed

to give a guarded welcome to the Government of India Act, 1919, which embodied the new Constitution, and gave to India certain real powers of parliamentary government for the first time. Mr. Gandhi had so far believed in the cause of the Allies that he had actually recruited for the Indian Army in Gujerat, his native part of India; but the publication of the secret treaties and the subsequent enactment of the Rowlatt Act by the Imperial Legislative Council shook his faith, and on his own confession it was about this time, between the publication of the secret treaties and 1919, that he began to doubt whether any good could come out of Nazareth. None the less, it was not till after the actual provisions of the new Constitution were known that he decided to turn his face against the Government. Even though he had publicly acknowledged that the new bill offered Indians ampler opportunities than they had ever enjoyed, he was so stung by what he called the at-

titude of official distrust shown in the Rowlatt Act, that he turned finally against the Government and launched Non-Cooperation on its disastrous career.

Two years later, on August 1st, 1921, I stood on the brow of Malabar Hill which looks down upon the city of Bombay. The Chaupatti sands were white with great multitudes of Mr. Gandhi's followers assembled to salute the passing of the British Raj and the establishment of Swaraj. Overhead the lowering monsoon sky spread its heavy grey clouds streaked with orange and gold from the sunset in the west. Beneath our feet lay the city spread out along the Island of Bombay. From half a dozen points, columns of black smoke rose from the piles of burning cloth and mingled their darker shades with the monsoon sky. Non-Cooperation had reached its high water mark. All India hung on Mahatma Gandhi's lips; and millions of ignorant men and women all over the Indian countryside, turning to

him as to a prophet, saluted the Bombay smoke of August First as the sign that Swaraj had come. For had he not promised the day of deliverance on the First of August, and was not the smell of the burning of foreign cloth an omen to show that the day of the alien ruler was over?

It has often been asked: What did Mr. Gandhi mean by Swaraj? Not even he himself knew; or if he did, he professed so many interpretations of it that in the end the world was bewildered and forsook him. Sometimes he interpreted it in the political sense of responsible government, sometimes he interpreted it in the purely personal sense of self-knowledge, self-discipline, self-control. In truth, Mahatma Gandhi cared nothing for politics and knew nothing of it. Statecraft to him was an unnecessary encumbrance in human life, for at the bottom of his heart he believed or professed to believe that the only permanent bonds which can hold human society together are those of good-

will and love. The ideal was too high even for him to reach, let alone the common humanity of India; and the policy which he founded on this conception of society naturally broke under the strain of circumstances. He attempted to impose upon his own movement an ideal too high for it; and he confessed himself that he had committed a "Himalayan blunder" in believing that a movement of passive resistance could long remain passive.

Here lay his fundamental error. He and India have paid for it since. But it none the less remains true that his influence, both for good and for evil, stretched more widely throughout India than the influence of any other man in our generation, or perhaps in any other. Non-Cooperation in some of its aspects will soon be forgotten, or will only be remembered as a movement composed of mixed good and evil which was marred by some hideous bloodshed. But whether Non-Cooperation is remembered or not, there

is no shadow of doubt that the influence of Mahatma Gandhi will remain, not in virtue of his spinning wheel or his homespun, but in virtue of personal example. It is idle to inquire what personality is, whence it comes or how it can move mountains; but the fact remains that the most novel feature in the whole landscape of India during the past five years has been the awakening of the masses to their political and economic condition. That awakening is Mahatma Gandhi's work. Thousands, if not millions, of Indians have understood for the first time during these years, vaguely and ignorantly, the meaning of the word "political"; and wherever Gandhi passed, he left behind him an imprint on all minds which will not rapidly be effaced. Therefore, despite all the extravagance, chicanery, corruption and cruelty of the Non-Cooperation movement, the net sum of it is not evil and goes to the credit of its creator.

Why, then, did the ablest men amongst

his lieutenants break away from his leadership three years ago, and thereby reduce his political influence to a nullity? In the end it was because they conceived of India in political terms and he did not. They could hardly listen without a smile of ridicule to his pæans of the spinning wheel and his glorification of homespun. Moreover, they realised that the evil flowering of his doctrines at Chauri-Chaura, at Bombay, and perhaps also in the Moplah Rebellion, could only bear fruit in severe acts of repression by the Government of India. Knowing full well—and the knowledge was shared with them by Gandhi himself—that in a struggle of physical force the Indian popular movement must inevitably be defeated, owing to lack of discipline, lack of cohesion, lack of trust in one another, the political leaders realised in 1922 that the time had come to call a halt on the negative side of Non-Cooperation and to consider seriously a radical change not only in the

tactics but in the strategy of the whole Nationalist movement.

A change could only mean one thing. With physical force ruled out of the question, with Gandhi falling into discredit, there remained but one course, the path of Constitutional agitation. Thus it was that within two years of the inauguration of the Constitution by His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught in Delhi, the worst enemies of the Constitution had begun to repent; and, though they veiled repentance in their professed intention to destroy the Constitution by obstruction from within, having failed to destroy it by violence from without, everyone knew that failure awaited them within the walls of the Legislative Assembly, as it overwhelmed them without. It is true that greater success might have attended their intention to obstruct had they been able to persuade the electorate to return them to the Legislative Councils and to the Legislative Assembly in the autumn of

1923 in larger numbers. As it was, the strength of the Swaraj Party, as the ex-Non-Cooperators called themselves in the Legislative Assembly, just fell short of the numbers necessary to conduct an effective campaign of obstruction; while in the Bengal Legislative Council, though the followers of Mr. C. R. Das were more numerous, and though the Bengal Government played into his hands more than once, the deadlock was only effected by a majority of one or two votes. It is surely significant that, after two years' experience of the working of the Constitution from within, the Swaraj Party should only have succeeded in producing a deadlock in one (perhaps two) Legislative Councils out of nine.

In the Legislative Assembly the first effect of the entry of the Swaraj Party was greatly to enliven the debates and to produce the first elements of deadlock; but within a year, though the debates themselves remained as lively as ever, the

deadlock was resolved and practically all the government legislation, including the Budget and the Finance Bill of 1925, passed through the Legislative Assembly intact. There were several reasons contributing to this result. I place first the discovery, which the Swarajists made early in their new career, that the Legislative Assembly, as one of the principal instruments of the new Constitution, was by no means a sham and that their influence over the actions and intentions of the Government of India was vastly greater than they had dreamed. Secondly comes the recovery of the Independent Party (ex-Liberals) from the futile position into which they had been manœuvred, partly by their own lack of judgment and partly by circumstances in 1924. These Independents, though a comparatively small party, were strong enough to hold the balance in the Legislative Assembly, whenever they chose, between the Swaraj Party and the Government of India. At the very

beginning of the session of 1924, that is immediately after the General Election, they precipitately committed themselves to join Pandit Motilal Nehru and his Swarajists in a campaign of obstruction, and when three months later the Assembly came to the Budget, the Independents, though they disliked the idea of throwing out the finances of the year, found themselves held as in a vice by their three months' old pledge to the Swaraj Party. Thus, in 1924 it seemed possible that the deadlock predicted by the Swarajists had actually been achieved. Within a few weeks, however, of the end of that session, the Independents showed signs of repenting of their action and when 1925 came round they had resumed their former liberty and played a most effective part in the deliberations of the Chamber.

The daily detail of the proceedings of the Assembly does not concern us here. It will suffice to conclude that the present Constitution, as seen in operation in the

Legislative Assembly and in the Legislative Councils, transitional and therefore unsatisfactory as it is, possesses great powers for good. I have often challenged my Indian friends to deny that the Constitution presents them with opportunities of doing things themselves, as well as of influencing the way in which the Government of India does them, which are so much greater than anything they ever enjoyed before, that it deserves at least the benefit of the doubt in their minds. This at all events is certain: that—without the changes wrought by the Constitution of 1919—neither in the Indianisation of the Civil Service, nor in the measures taken to prepare young Indians for military and even for naval service, nor in the protection of Indian industry, nor in many other directions welcomed by Indian public opinion, would the Government of India have even contemplated the policies which are now in active operation. Take, for instance, the Steel Protection Act of

1924. The Government of India, under the regime which prevailed till 1921, would not have proposed the measure; public opinion at home would never have accepted it; and even if the Indian Government had contemplated any departure in this direction the Secretary of State would have forbidden it. Observe now the change which has come over the scene owing to the creation of the new Legislatures. Indian public opinion is not only vocal, but influential, and in many respects effective, for the first time in history. Without possessing the same authority over the Government which the House of Commons enjoys, it has over and over again in the last five years bent the Government of India to its will and thereby shown that the present Indian Constitution is an instrument of large effect.

Whether India is aware of the problems which still lie ahead before the present Constitution can reach a permanent and

stable form is at least doubtful. The Legislative Councils of the provinces, for instance, will have to show a much longer and more impressive tale of achievements before they can claim that they have proved that the democratic institutions of the West are a plant which can flourish in an Eastern soil. Moreover, the relation between these Councils and the Central Government is a vital and complicated matter which the average Indian has never studied; and, though the present Indian Constitution appears superficially to wear a federal aspect, no one, either British or Indian, has yet attempted to envisage the whole problem of government in India as a study in Federalism. That the Government of India itself is now aware that the successive changes wrought in the Indian Constitution during the past two generations have brought India to the threshold of Constitutional problems of vast import is shown by the fact that the Viceroy only last autumn ordered the

preparation of a monograph on the relations of central and local governments in the principal federal units of the world, as an introduction to the study of Indian Constitutional Reform which will be taken seriously in hand by the Royal Commission of 1929.

Important as is the federal aspect of the Indian problem, it is only one and not the most difficult of the perplexities which any progress in constitutional reform will encounter. Whether we look at India through the eyes of the politician, the political scientist, or the historian, she presents a complex political study without rival in the modern world. Her unity is rent by the feud of Hindu and Moslem: her nationality is impaired by aggressive local patriotisms which makes Bengal the true motherland of the Bengali and leaves India only the second claim: and she is accustomed to autocracy by many generations of personal rule. Lacking either the precept or the example of politics as

they are embodied for Europe in the thought of Greece, the practice of Rome, and the gradual development of democratic institutions in modern times, the Indian peoples are hampered in the march to their Goal, and the political spirit is slow in its growth to maturity.

The human material which is the only true marrow of democracy is not found in profusion in India; and, unless it can be multiplied by opportunity and experience, full self-government will be long delayed. It may be true that all men have a birthright of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, but it is not true that all men are born to govern themselves. The capacity for political responsibility in India is not yet common enough to justify complete Indian autonomy; and, therefore, the reform of the Constitution must proceed by gradual stages, from experiment to experiment, so that each step in progress shall represent a genuine advance in the political education of the

country. The application of this principle implies a constitution which will provide substantial scope for each of the Indian legislatures in such a manner that where mistakes are made the onerous consequences will fall on the shoulders of those who make them, and equally, that, where political duty is discharged with success, the Indian shall be able to say that he has achieved his aim on his own merits. This is, in fact, the theory of the present Constitution; but its operation has not fulfilled the required object, for two reasons.

First: the economic condition of India was unfavourable to genuine progress along these lines, because financial stringency forbade the expenditure of money on new programmes of reform. Now, in education, public health, local self-government, which were the subjects handed over to Indian Ministers, no effective reform could be made without money; and since there was no money, there was no

reform. The first three years of the new era were thus almost barren of achievement; and energies which ought to have been fruitfully engaged in constructive work found little outlet except in renewed political agitation. Here was misfortune of a far-reaching kind.

Second, and perhaps more significant, the extent to which the Ministers and the Legislative Councils were made responsible was hardly wide enough, even in good times, to make the test of responsibility sufficiently searching. It may be argued that the educational policy pursued by any legislative body is one of the highest tests of its sense of national responsibility; but the crucial test is applied when law and order are at stake, for here a Minister must show courage as well as intelligence; and courage is the very nerve and sinew of political responsibility. To apply this test would mean a much larger degree of responsible government in the Legislative Councils of the

Indian Provinces than they now possess; and there are many experienced British administrators who shrink from the risks involved. None the less, as long as the Indian knows that the long arm of British power will be stretched out to restore order when he or his fellows misbehave, he will not seriously endeavour to control those passions which are a constant menace to the social peace of India.

An adequate account of the constitutional problem requires more space than is available to me now. So I must hasten to the sum of my conclusions on the whole matter. The preceding chapter gave a short account of the operation of modern forces throughout Asia; and in these pages we have taken a more extended view of it in India.

The present Indian constitution attempts to transplant Western institutions to an Eastern soil. The difficulties to be overcome are:—

(1) India is not really a political

country. Politics are, no doubt, the all-absorbing interest of the educated classes, but even these classes are not politically minded. They are quick to learn the forms and phrases of political life, but have shown little aptitude for statecraft on a national scale. Throughout the ages India has been accustomed to accept government imposed from above; and the mind of her people has never been stirred till recently by political ambition. The literature of India contains no political treatise comparable with Aristotle's "Politics", Plato's "Republic", Machiavelli's "Prince", Montesquieu's "Esprit des Lois", Burke's "Essays and Speeches", Mill's "Liberty", or Alexander Hamilton's "Federalist." This shows that the habit of political thought has never grown in India. It is only another way of saying that India is a religious not a political continent. The rich soil of political theory in which the Greek States grew, and the massive work in political administra-

tion which gave Rome her predominance, provided Europe with a prepared field of statecraft which is almost wholly lacking in India. India has no such harvest of political experience.

(2) This leads to a certain unreality in Indian politics. Where political theory is not an indigenous growth, political progress must necessarily suffer a serious handicap. Cognate with this is the fact that the sense of responsibility in politics is weak in India, and the willingness to take the consequences of political action is correspondingly feeble.

(3) The most serious obstacle to Indian political progress is the lack of leaders. Commanding personalities cannot arise in a country where there has hitherto been so little demand for them. The factors described in paragraphs (1) and (2) above account largely for the lack of big men in India to-day; but they do not wholly account for it. A further reason for it is to be found in the fact that

Indians have shared too little in the administration of their own country. The British Government is, therefore, to blame to some extent for not training more Indians in politics and administration. There is no doubt that if the Government had made a more serious and sustained effort to Indianise the Civil Service and the Army, the problem of Indian Home Rule would not encounter so many serious difficulties as those which confront it to-day. A great effort has been made by the Government of India during the past five years to bring more Indians into the administration; but it will be many years before there are enough trained men to carry on the administration of their own country.

(4) The Indian Peninsula contains many diverse racial elements separated by great distances and even greater differences of speech and social habit. Scores of separate languages and dialects are spoken. In the Bombay Legislative

Council alone there are four recognised official languages. English is, therefore, the *lingua franca* of the country; and the Nationalists themselves acknowledge that, but for the common medium of the English language, they would never have been able to develop their own movement. The problem is, therefore, continental in scope; and, when India is described as a nation, the word connotes the *hope* of eventual national unity and not the established *fact* of unity.

(5) The feud between Hindu and Mussulman greatly hampers progress towards unity, and complicates the problem of self-government to a degree almost unknown in any other country. For a brief moment Mr. Gandhi was able to unite these two communities under the banner of Non-Cooperation; but when the excitement provoked by the Treaty of Sèvres had subsided, and when Non-Cooperation itself declined, the two communities fell further apart than ever.

(6) The economic organisation of the country presents another defect. Nine-tenths of the population of India live and labour as they lived and laboured two thousand years ago. Despite all efforts to improve agriculture, despite also the growth of large and flourishing industries in Bombay and Bengal, despite too the construction of railways, the economic organisation of India is still mediæval. Until the development of the country is brought more nearly abreast of the normal needs of a modern State, the Indian Government, whatever its complexion, will be seriously hampered, especially in Finance.

In a word, India is trying to run a twentieth century constitution on the resources of the Middle Ages.

IV

EAST AND WEST IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The relations between Europe and Asia in the Twentieth Century have been the subject of anxious discussion by many writers ever since Europe realized that the victory of Japan over Russia twenty years ago was the first sign that a new era had dawned in the East. The rising sun of Japan shed a new light upon the Orient, revealing Asia in renascence. Europe was no longer secure in her supremacy, and this rude shock to our complacent sense of superiority engendered fears in many a European breast that, with Japan as the spear-head of the counter-attack on the West, Asia was at last preparing her long-delayed revenge.

The German Emperor bade his fellow Europeans arm themselves against the Yellow Peril, and a thousand facile pens in Europe and America set to work to embellish the theme of the great struggle between White and Colour. The teeming man-power of Asia was paraded as great armies of invasion before the gaze of the world, and the eye of fear saw our western civilisation as a giant with feet of clay.

There are still critics who bid us quake before the coming danger and find in the impoverishment of Europe after the war a new source of fear. Now, it is undeniable that the Great War came very near to destroying the foundation of modern civilisation in many parts of Europe and that the recovery of the continent has been painfully slow; but the spirit of man in Europe is not dismayed, nor is the mission of Europe finished. We must beware of being deceived by appearances. Let me take England as an instance of

the ease with which appearances may mislead the observer to false conclusions. England strained her credit and her manpower almost to the breaking-point in order to defeat Germany because she knew that a German victory would spell disaster to herself and to her allies. She emerged from the war to find that the means of her recovery did not lie within easy reach. The intricate mechanism of international credit, on which her foreign trade depended, was deranged; and the cost of domestic production, combined with the disorganization of her former markets abroad, hampered the restoration of her industries. Every industry suffered, but coal-mining and shipping were more severely stricken than the rest. In this plight England looked as if she had passed her zenith and the facile daily press raised a dolorous chorus of jeremiads which was heard all over the world. Naturally the world believed the evidence of its own eyes, and accepted the legend

of British decay as true. But other men took other views. Knowing that the foundation of all power is credit, the British Government set to work to restore British credit. The measures necessary to this purpose were costly and, for the time, they have increased the difficulties of our industries; but they were rightly taken and they will bring their sure reward. I will go further, and say that even the paralysis of the coal trade is a blessing in disguise, for it is even now compelling us to take stock of our whole industrial condition and to discard the fossil remains of the nineteenth century. It is my conviction that England is going through an economic regeneration and the pains which she now suffers are not the throes of dissolution, but the pangs of a new birth.

In different ways the same is true of other parts of Europe—through the French are still unable to see the wood for the trees—and therefore our digres-

sion into domestic England is justified as a necessary part of our estimate of the relative strength of Europe and Asia. Given time, the recovery of Europe is certain.

So, to return to this matter of the impending struggle between the two continents, let us ask what reason is there to estimate the renascence of Asia in terms of the decline of Europe. Does anyone imagine that the English-speaking democracies will sit idle while any Asiatic Power seizes the control of the Pacific Ocean or those other warm seas which wash the shores of Asia and Australasia? Moreover, if the gauntlet of challenge were thrown at our feet, the fleets of Britain and America would see to it that the issue was decided in one way and one way alone. And if we think of the conflict as an invasion by land, there arise before us the gigantic physical obstacles which make the transport of great armies almost impossible. Even without the impedi-

ment of distance, by mountain, desert, and plain, it is very doubtful whether the united armies of Asia could ever be set in motion. Such an enterprise implies a unity of purpose of which there is no sign; and, therefore, to add up the millions of China and India, and then multiply them by the power of Japan, is the arithmetic of Bedlam.

We will pause here, for a moment, to meet the objection that there *is* a unity of feeling in Asia to-day. In a limited and temporary sense, it is true to say that Asiatics are united in their desire to protect their civilisation from Western interference. The Egyptians in their demand for a democratic constitution, the Indians in their aspiration after Swaraj, the Chinese in their boycotts, the Japanese in their insistence on racial equality at the Paris Conference, all are animated by the same kind of feeling, namely, the passion of resistance against Western aggression. Whatever unity there is, springs from a

source outside Asia, for it is anti-European; but, in proportion as this feeling translates itself into conscious national patriotism it will divide and not unite the peoples of Asia. Moreover, the period of aggressive Imperialism is practically over, and therefore the pressure which may have produced a semblance of united purpose in Asia is being relaxed by the deliberate policy of the Governments of Europe. We need but recall our bird's-eye view of the modern Orient to find evidence of the political change which is being wrought throughout Asia; and it is safe to predict that the solution of domestic problems will be the chief preoccupation of most Asiatic peoples for a long time to come.

There is a Chinese proverb which says that men live only one hundred years but cherish the griefs of a thousand. Applying the moral here, a critic of my thesis might suggest that Asia will bide her time, put her house in order, and at some

distant day strike with the same surprise as Japan struck Russia twenty years ago. For my part, I do not think we need entertain this bogey. There is, as we have suggested above, no cause for alarm on military or naval grounds, while on economic grounds Asiatic competition is a challenge which we must meet but need not fear. The marrow of the matter is the human quality of the individual; and in general achievement, the white peoples show no sign of slackening either in their inventiveness, or in their courage, or in their adventurousness. Much of the alarmist writing about Asia springs from fear of the unknown, by which the portent in the East appears as a dreadful threat to our prestige. And perhaps the alarm is due to a misconception of the nature and the source of the prestige of the West in the East. If it rested solely on evidence of material power, then we might have qualms about its permanence; but it rests on mightier foundations than

these, for it is the tribute of the Orient to the unquenchable spirit of our race. It is neither extorted nor maintained by ships and by guns, and it will not be threatened by these. Neither in terms of material power, nor in the measure of any other criterion is there any cause for alarm in what is called the menace of colour. Rather do I see in the economic and political growth of Asia a new incentive to progress for us; and I do not doubt that this spur to effort will produce excellent results, for the genius of our race does not fail to respond to so plain a call.

Finally, before we pass to other aspects of our future relations with the Orient, I would suggest that, if Europe will consent to use the instruments and to assimilate the spirit of the League of Nations in her own domestic concerns, she will find that some of the Asiatic nations, notably the Indians and the Chinese, will the more readily welcome her co-operation in their affairs. And they will be prepared

to adopt the League as the arena of their foreign policy with a greater alacrity than any European nation has yet shown. To the Indian, the appeal of the brotherhood of man comes with greater force than to some of us because his conception of patriotism—if indeed he knows the sentiment at all—is not synonymous with an exclusive national sovereignty associated with a definite territorial allegiance. The growth of a sense of international citizenship may be quicker in the East than in the West for this reason. I acknowledge freely that there is much to be done in Europe before the League can be a secure haven for any nation; but its growth in stature during the past seven years and the manifest influence which it already exercises over European thought are favourable signs. And as the League spreads the benefit of its spirit and its method more widely over the world, it will take the sting out of the strained relations now existing between East and West by offer-

ing each of its members a fair field, an equal opportunity, regardless of their material power.

We leave, therefore, these tests of brute force behind us and now proceed to consider the fascinating matter before us in terms other than of mere power.

The Nineteenth Century was an age of aggressive growth, each nation like Nature in Tennyson's poem, "red in tooth and claw." It was the era of the survival of the fittest and of *Machtpolitik*. But the apparently fittest did not survive, and the very home and citadel of *Machtpolitik* is in ruins. The majestic wheel which Bismarck set spinning has come full circle; the people whom he once served so well, but with a too limited vision, have paid the penalty of his policy; and the world which was so nearly shipwrecked by them has learned that the worship of power exacts a terrible price from its devotees which can only be paid with their lives. Power, based solely on material

foundations, breeds its own decay; and even the Japanese, who once believed that Imperial Germany was the one admirable nation in Europe, must have digested the lesson of the Kaiser's fall. Now, there is a school of historians who gravely conclude from their study of the successive generations of man, that each age must learn its own lessons and that the world is condemned to watch and to suffer the recurring spectacle of the rise and fall of a *Roi Soleil*, a Napoleon, a Hohenzollern, without learning, once and for all, the meaning of these transient figures. Knowledge seems to breed a scepticism regarding man and to suggest that, of all animals, he is the least teachable. That is a sobering, nay, a depressing thought, which I ask you to keep as a corrective to excessive zeal, not as a guide to conduct.

The Twentieth Century, if it is to rival the Nineteenth especially in political achievement, must take a new course. By

all means let it carry on the marvellous labours of its predecessor in the sphere of invention, of science, and of industry; but a new departure in international relations is needed to prevent each new discovery from becoming merely a weapon of destruction. So, if *Machtpolitik* was the watchword of the century that is gone, equality of opportunity must be the watchword of our century. Not that all men are equal, which is nonsense; but that, inasmuch as different peoples reach different heights of achievement, and show different kinds of excellence, each ought to enjoy the best opportunity to show what is in them. We wish to see Asia display her ancient power in new ways, either by following our example, or, if that prove uncongenial to her, as well it may, by creating her own new polity. So far, no Asiatic people has done more than imitate the West, almost slavishly, in the use of Ford cars, motion pictures and parliaments. It was

one of the most remarkable things in my five Indian years that, apart from the Ruling Princes who are autocrats in their own right, only two men, one a Punjab Minister and the other a Madras journalist, challenged England's right to "thrust democracy on India." To the latter I retorted that his own people appeared to be clamouring for it and that, only here and there, was a voice raised in protest against the introduction of the politics of the West. All he could reply was to admit that his fellow-countrymen lacked political invention.

This admission throws a new light upon the challenge of Asia. When men speak of this challenge we know what they mean; and, as we have acknowledged already, the awakening of this ancient continent is a new incentive to us. But, in truth, it is not we who are the challenged, but the challengers. We throw open the door of opportunity, and say to Asia—a fair field, no favour, and let the best man

win. Do any of you doubt which is the best man?

Now, though this is a political study, we must remember that politics is not the end, but the means of life. For us, especially the English-speaking democracies, the words of Diana of the Crossways are forever true. "Politics is the first business of men; the school to mediocrity; to the dullard his amphitheatre; to the covetously ambitious, a sty; arms of Titans to the desperately enterprising; Olympus to the genius." These words are true, whether the man be an Akbar, a Napoleon, a Disraeli or an Abraham Lincoln. But if we are honest in our confession that politics is not an end in itself, but a means to a better life, we must accept the possibility that the forms of government may vary. The end remains the same, but the means differ as we pass from one region to another. Judged, therefore, as a means, and apart from our rooted prepossession in favour of democ-

racy, the politics of the East have a claim of their own. In Solomon, in Asoka, in Akbar, and in some of the great Chinese Emperors, the East has had good and appropriate governments of its own. The epigram that declares good government no substitute for self-government loses its meaning east of Suez and west of the Golden Gate, for the Orient has shown that autocracy can be both good and appropriate. This is one of the greatest of the contrasts between East and West. The Oriental is as instinctively obedient to authority as the Englishman, for instance, is disobedient to it. Born and bred under autocracy for centuries, contemplating his ruler as the wielder of some divine authority, he likes to feel the hand of government upon him.

Let me digress once more, for a moment, to illustrate from an Indian source, the attitude of the Oriental to his government. Five years ago I spent an instructive hour in Simla in the company of a

distinguished Indian gentleman who had held high office under the Government in India, after serving as Prime Minister of a native Indian State. I give you his words in my own paraphrase.

"You know," he said, "that I am a social reformer and that I acknowledge the debt which India owes to England for many things, both material and moral. You have set up a standard which we want to live up to. But I am not sure that your method is really appropriate to India. I only wish it was. Let me offer you the contrast of life in an Indian State, under the autocratic and personal rule of a Maharajah, and life in British India. From your point of view, no doubt, the advantages lie wholly on your side of the line; and I say frankly that I prefer your way of life too. But the Indian ryot sees the world with other eyes. Where you see progress, he only sees *dik*, trouble; when you think of the public welfare, he sees only a gratuitous interference with the

even tenour of his daily life. Your regulations and your inspections are to him a weariness of the flesh without meaning or purpose. He pities you for thinking that you can change the eternal order of things by writing on pieces of paper, but he forgives you because he imagines that your efficient activity must be an infliction of the Almighty in the form of an administrative St. Vitus dance.

"One thing he prizes. He knows that you are just. His interests are safe in your hands; and when he thinks of these things he calls you Father and Mother. But, despite this great admission in your favour, at the bottom of his heart he prefers the other way of life in an Indian State. For, there he lives as his forbears have always lived, under a rule which you consider harsh, but which leaves him to his own devices for the greater part of the year. The Maharajah has the right to rule him; that he knows and would not dream of disputing it. Moreover the ruler

here is a person, visible and great, surrounded by the panoply of a highly-coloured regime, and probably worshipping as the ryot himself worships.

"I think I can sum it up best by saying that your rule spells interference and annoyance for every one of the three hundred and sixty-five days of the year, while Indian rule, with all its cruelty and its exactions, bears heavily upon him for perhaps twenty days in all. He submits to the torture of the twenty days and thereby purchases comparative freedom for the rest."

"Democracy to him means nothing; politics less than nothing. They are not his business. And I doubt whether even Mahatma Gandhi's influence has changed his old ways."

As I listened to this account of East and West, I began to appreciate the motive of that "patient deep disdain" in which the Oriental holds us. Asiatics are profoundly impressed by the evidence of

our material power, but at the bottom of their hearts they pity us as the victims of our own success. To the secular Chinese and to the religious Hindu alike our speed is no progress; it is merely movement without a motive. The modern world says to itself unceasingly, "let us move on"—but whither? Speed is our fetish, and is becoming an end in itself. And if we compare our age with the great ages of the past, can we say that, in all that really matters, the era of the aeroplane is happier or more creative than the age of Elizabeth? When Sir Francis Drake and all the captains courageous of that immortal time sailed the Seven Seas; when the Virgin Queen whose name this University bears, reigned in England, fulfilled with poetry and with the glory of achievement; those were the days when that spirit, which is your heritage and mine, well-nigh reached its highest manifestation and showed what creative man can do.

I am no *laudator temporis acti.* Let the dead bury its dead. I believe with the poet that the most surprising songs are yet to be sung. But, as we stand here at this moment, our creative impulse is almost exclusively devoted to the harnessing of material forces to our purpose, and we are not very sure what our purpose is. It is just at this point, when we pause in our headlong course, to ask where we are going, that the East has a message for us.

Now, at first blush, it might seem as if Asia were merely presumptuous in offering to teach Europe and America any lesson. The great stagnant continent owes the impulse of new life to us, so what can it have to teach? We are so convinced of our superiority that we believe that all the gifts are in our hands and that the East has but to receive them thankfully and make what she can of them. History tells a different tale. So, having indulged our western pride to the

full, we had better try to see ourselves as others see us, remembering that we differ as much from others as they differ from us.

A competent observer has reminded us that, from the beginning of authentic history Europe has received from Asia far more than she has given. "The people of the setting sun—for that is the most probable explanation of the word *Europe*—derived from Asia their letters, their arithmetic, and their knowledge of the way to guide ships out of sight of land. When the Mongol, or rather a small federation of tribes from among a division of the Mongols, first burst out of his steppe he reached France, and on the plain of Chalons nearly overthrew the Roman Empire. When the Arabs, never fourteen millions strong, debouched from their deserts, they defeated both Eastern Rome and Persia, extirpated the Vandals of North Africa, conquered Spain, and after their first energy had decayed, drove the

picked chivalry of Europe out of Palestine. When the third Asiatic explosion took place, the Mongol conquered China and India, which he kept, and Russia, which he only lost after two centuries, and made all Europe tremble lest by defeating Austria he should acquire dominance through the whole west. Intermediately, a little Asiatic tribe seated itself in Anatolia, warred down the Eastern Empire of Rome, threatened all Central Europe," and to a late hour retained the glorious provinces which it oppressed only because, by the consent of all who have observed him, the Turk is one of the best individual soldiers in the world.

Moreover, before the western peoples who now exploit the East had emerged from their cradles in cave and forest, the peoples of Asia had carried the arts to a high degree of perfection. Their architecture boasts some of the marvels of the world; and "while no pottery can excel Chinese porcelain, no swordsmith a

Damascus blade, no goldsmith will promise to improve on a Trichinopoly chain." Asia has built the Alhambra, the great mosques of Islam, the Taj Mahal, the great temples at Angkor, Borobudur, Prambanan, Madura, Benares, and Budhgaya, the Temple of Solomon, the Pyramids of Egypt, the Great Wall of China and the ancient irrigation works of Mesopotamia.

Now, I do not suggest that, in themselves, these are greater achievements of the creative mind of man than Cologne Cathedral, or the *Lusitania*, or even the Woolworth Building in New York. But they fear comparison with no modern structure; and for sheer beauty the Taj Mahal has no rival. And though in music and sculpture, the artistic work of Asiatics has never reached the excellence of Mozart, or Michael Angelo, there are qualities in Asiatic melody which have an appeal all their own. Any evening in Simla you may hear a coolie intoning a

chant which recalls the airs of Palestrina; and the Sultans of Java possess in the Bedoya and the Wajang an enchanting and graceful ceremonial dance which makes the Corps de Ballet of the Paris Opera look tawdry and the Russian Ballet merely a boisterous romp. Or, again, watch a Chinese carpenter making a chair, and you will see that in fashioning the commonest objects he touches nothing that he does not beautify—which reminds us that one of the great ages of English furniture owed its chief inspiration to China.

This record of the past achievements of Asia may well give us pause in our confident assumption of western superiority. Who shall say that the Orient will never again give birth to poets like the Psalmist, or Solomon, or Omar, to lawgivers like Moses, Asoka or Confucius, to soldiers like Tamerlane or Genghis Khan? It would be presumption indeed to deny that a soil, once so fertile, may not blos-

som again. It is true that Asiatics do not appear to be able to sustain a long endeavour, that they grow weary by the way, and that, therefore, the recovery from their present apathy may demand too great an effort. Equally true is it that they have lost heart in the competition with western products, and with it have lost much of the skill that made the carpets of Persia and the silks of Benares the admiration of the world. Even worse is the corruption of taste which they have suffered. There are few things more depressing than the furnishings of an Indian Maharajah's palace or the royal apartments of Siam, where the tawdry ugliness of the Victorian age has effaced all native beauty.

None the less, I think it is possible to see even in the worst manifestations of western influence in the East something more than a depressing vitiation of taste. It may be that we are witnessing the beginning of a process whereby the spirit of

Asia is arousing itself to new life under the fertilising touch of Western thought. There is many a process in nature which, unlovely in itself, yet leads to beauty; and in the apparent decay of autumn there is always the promise of spring. So it may be in the Asia of to-day.

But, even if the Orient should never blossom again, we must still remain debtors to it. We owe to it, not only the foundations of knowledge, in our letters and our numerals, but also the very interpretation of life itself. No guess at the final truth of things ever made by a European mind has satisfied the soul of man: the most we have ever done in religious thought is to adopt beliefs of Asiatic origin to suit our own temper. The Romans bequeathed no religion, except perhaps the sense of duty, to the modern world; the beautiful myths of Greece have vanished altogether; and, though Protestant Christianity is European, its origin lies in Asia. We are an objective people, meas-

uring by eye and ear, and judging by results; and, if some European minds have acquired the habit of abstract thought, the genius of religious speculation is not natural to us. We must go to Asia for religious inspiration, and even when we find it there, we transform what we find into a code of conduct. Our concern is with the life we see around us, and our religion takes its ethical quality from the practical turn of our minds. Not so the Asiatic, whose most characteristic religions portray the material world as illusion, or as a misfortune from which man must escape at all costs.

It has been argued that Hinduism, for instance, is not a religion at all, but merely an exercise in intellectual speculation; and I can imagine the western Christian pleading that a European Cathedral is a more appropriate shrine of devotion than a Hindu temple. Approach the great temple of Madura on the evening of some great festival, and you will find

yourself in a pandemonium of sound, colour and smell. The ear is assailed by drum and gong; the air is heavy with a hundred scents, the smell of sacrificial oil, ghi, and decaying flowers; a procession of priests, bearing a forest of torches, and chanting ancient Sanskrit psalms, conducts the image of the god or goddess round the echoing vault, while the bats flit through the lurid smoke, like shades of ill omen. Overhead towers the gigantic oblong pyramid which dominates the landscape for miles around, each terrace carved into every imaginable shape, from the simplest figures to the most unblushing pornography. An exclamation of mingled wonder and disgust springs to your lips, and the Brahmin beside you, guessing your thought, will say "This is only a show for the ignorant, like the bread and circuses of your Roman Emperors: the truth of Hinduism is not here." And when you have read the Psalms of the Maratha Saints or the teaching of

Ramanaja you will realise that the Brahmin did well to warn you not to take the evidence of your eyes and ears as the sole witness to the truth of the Hindu religion.

The Western mind is revolted by the outward show of Hindu ceremonial and bewildered by the symbolism of Hindu religious art. It finds in Buddhist forms something more appropriate to the life of the spirit: for, whereas the representative Hindu structure portrays, with deliberate extravagance, life in all its forms, delicate and indelicate, crude and refined, bestial and spiritual, the Buddhist customarily offers, in panels of sculpture, only the picture of the life of Gautama, in a kind of elaborate Buddhist version of the Stations of the Cross, with statues of the Buddha himself which, in their suave and appealing human dignity, present the whole contrast with such a typical Hindu form as the Siva Natarajan.

The Brahmin, who warned us a moment ago that the truth of Hinduism lay

not in its forms but in its thought, clearly appreciated our difficulty in reconciling the different aspects of his own religion, but even he would find it no easy task to explain whence they all arose. Where he hesitates, we cannot hope to succeed. Nor need we embark on the search. It is not the origin of Asiatic religion which concerns us. Rather should we ask ourselves whether there is any lesson for us in the contrast between our way of thinking and the Asiatic mode of thought which is so strange to us.

In an earlier passage in this argument we described the motive of our civilisation as the worship of speed, and we were led to suspect that the Asiatic had some reason for saying that our progress is merely motion without a motive. For, unless we are conscious of a purpose beyond the mere exercise of material power, we cannot say that our speed will carry us to any destination whatsoever. If we conceive of the universe merely as a playground

for the skill of man, we remain incomplete, lacking the motive of all high endeavour. The triumphs of man over nature are a legitimate pride to us, but they cannot give complete satisfaction, for they are the means and not the end of life. The Greeks held that the better life was the aim of living, meaning that the kernel of man's existence lay outside and above the world of matter. That is precisely what we are too prone to forget: and that is the substance of the lesson which Asia offers us.

There is an idea, fashionable among many rudderless modern folk, that a religious synthesis is even now in the making which will combine the themes of all religions in some greater whole. It is inspired by the desire to take what is best from all and thus create a creed which shall have a universal application. This religious Esperanto is a mirage; and Esperanto is not a higher but a lower creation than any living speech. Words are

not mere sounds; they are full of meaning, the vital offspring of the association of ideas. The aroma of many memories clings to them, and

> As a perfume doth remain
> In the folds where it has lain,

so, deeply folded in the brain of every nation is its religious faith.

When we apply this illustration to the search for the meaning of life, we shall find that it warns us not to borrow wholesale the religious thought of the East, for then we shall have a surfeit of exotic diet. If we borrow, we must borrow with discrimination; and mere imitation, though it may be flattering to the East, will not be profitable to us. We must take account of the real differences between East and West before we can take even the first step. Some of these differences we already know. Others will emerge as we study the circumstances which sur-

round the life of man in the Orient. A European philosopher, recently travelling round the globe, has furnished us with a complete record of the changes which his mind and his body seemed to undergo as he passed from the cold North to the warm and humid South. His evidence is illuminating for our purpose and is transcribed here.

"In accordance with the surroundings in which one happens to be," he writes, "different traits gain predominance . . . and a different set of peculiarities are manifested according to physical coincidences . . . This damp heat heat removes all my inhibition." Here in the Indian Ocean "I strive in vain . . . to recall the sensation which the Atlantic and the North Sea have created in me so often. Would an Indian dream of the gods which the vision of the Himalayas quite naturally creates in his soul, if he beheld the shimmering icebergs of the North Sea? Probably he would shiver

too much;" while I, under this humid sky, "begin to feel quite indifferent to my critical powers of perception. I feel tempted to surrender myself completely to the sway of unlimited possibilities."

Our travelling philosopher reaches Ceylon and continues this private journal of his soul with the words:—

"What becomes of me on the green island of Lanka? Every hour I am sensible of a change in me. I feel that in this hothouse air it is futile to work, to wish, to strive; nothing succeeds but what happens of its own accord. And an incredible number of things do happen here by themselves, more than I had ever thought possible. In fact everything within me is happening of its own accord. My volition wanes irresistibly. I am transformed into a gentle, soft creature who enjoys life without ambition and without any creative desire.

"The whole of my life has turned into a process of vegetation. But of course

this latter concept appears to be true only when drawn from the flora of the tropics, not from that of northern latitudes. There vegetating implies a minimum of life—a form of existence barely sufficient unto itself. Here it implies a maximum. These plants which rise overnight from the earth to the sky resemble gods in their vitality. In Ceylon, as elsewhere, vegetating signifies a form of existence which proceeds without effort, but then effort is superfluous here: everything succeeds without it. Here vegetating becomes the form of all life, even of mental life; the mind becomes rampant, like tropical plants. Already I realise in myself that the mental life of tropical man is comprehensible only from the botanical point of view. His images blossom forth like flowers, wildly, luxuriantly, confusedly, without effort and without the supervision of the gardener, and are therefore irresponsible. It is in this way, no doubt, that we should explain the history of In-

dian mythology: the stern teaching of the sages of the Northwest could not survive for long in the South; its simplicity soon began to develop into aimless exuberance. Thousands of gods sprang from the fruitful soil like mushrooms after rain."

Now, to the eye of the West, the East appears like a vast phantasmagoria. Nature and Religion alike appear in strange forms, less susceptible to any known measurement than the more precise manifestations of occidental mind and matter. There is no clear frontier between myth and fact. History is legend; and the Hindu will accept the narrative of the Mahabharata as the truth of history as readily as—perhaps more readily than—any scientific record of human progress founded on the careful research of the historian. The Indian sagas, of which the Mahabharata is one of the greatest, are to him the precious chronicles of his own greatness, a drama staged in the era when men were as gods and gods were as men.

They portray the golden age in the same manner in which the Homeric epics describe the spacious days when human heroes strove with the Olympians; and, to the Hindu mind, they are true, not because they spring from any reliable historical source, but because they reveal one of the fundamental truths of the universe: namely, that the invisible and supernatural world is more significant than our visible earth.

The Hindu reads the Ramayana, not as an objective tale of great events, but as the reflection upon a majestic background of his own inner experience. The incarnation of Gautama in the Buddha, or the Immaculate Conception itself, are not mysteries but realities to him; and in our own day Mahatma Gandhi figured in countless Indian minds, not as the political person, but as the reincarnation of a deity. So closely interwoven are religion and experience in the East, that the world of reality is not to be explained in its own

terms, but in those of the religious imagination. Thus history as a merely human record, has little or no place in the Indian mind. The recital of facts is a profitless occupation; for the material world is not a fact, it is an illusion. The doctrine of *Maya*, which proclaims the world as illusion, is the central feature of this kind of Eastern thought; and is only comprehensible to us when we consider it as the product of its own environment.

The origin of our minds is very different. The West cannot conceive of Nature as Illusion. Facts are significant to us, and we must work out our salvation by them and through them in a manner wholly foreign to the Oriental. Count Keyserling, whom I have quoted above, concludes his remarkable study of the Indian mind by asking:—

"And what is valuable," he asks, "what essential—significance or facts? Significance alone; facts as such are wholly irrelevant. Thus India, with its

tendency to producing myths, has, judged from the angle of life, chosen the better part as opposed to precise Europe."

Now *we* must ask, is it true that India has chosen the better path than precise Europe? We will answer, No! Our denial springs from no contempt for the ancient wisdom of the East, but from the knowledge that there can be no question here of better or of worse, because the criteria of excellence are not the same for us as for the Oriental. In the East, both in the dry desert and in the humid tropics, Nature, the all-powerful, oppresses her children. Her will, in drought and in plenty, is stronger than theirs, and they know it. Hence the patience and the fatalism of the Orient: hence, too, its other-worldliness. We, who are born in the North, stand firm on the earth, and Nature yields to our touch. We gain nothing by taking flight into the alien empyrean of Asiatic religious speculation; but we must, none the less, acknowl-

edge that Asia possesses something on which we set too light a store. If one of the lessons which the West can teach the East is the value of truth and the value of time, the East can teach the West that our view of truth is too limited and that in the effort to gain time we may sacrifice those qualities of the human spirit which ought to enable us to use our time to the best advantage. In a word, the East teaches us the value of eternal things.

We can learn this lesson, to our enduring profit, without sacrificing the gains we have made in the material world. Indeed, you may observe that science, the handmaid of our power, has already changed our outlook on matter and now proclaims a reading of the universe far more congenial to the spiritual mind than its earlier materialistic message. Where once we were told that our whole existence was founded on the visible world, we now know that invisible forces are supreme; and the knowledge brings us a long stride

nearer the ancient spiritual temper of Asia. And when Rumour, "the news of the wind" which travels more swiftly than the wind itself, spreads through the whispering Galleries of Asia the news that Western men have reached the very heart of all meaning, even by a very different road, the men of the East will see in us, not enemies, but brothers in a strange disguise.

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