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Book No. New

A HUNDRED YEARS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

By

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DUCKWORTH .

3 HENRIETTA STREET, LONDON, W.C.2

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CHAPTER I

EMPIRE AND COMMONWEALTH

IN this book we are concerned with the history of the British Empire during the hundred years that began with the accession of Queen Victoria in 1837, but not with the whole Empire, for, although the United Kingdom is its central and original portion, we shall have little to say of what happened there during the period. We shall deal only with the outer realms of the empire that owe allegiance to the monarch who sits upon the ancient throne of England and with their mutual interaction with the central islands.

The term "empire" was applied to the territories ruled over by the King of England long before they included any lands beyond the ocean, and we may conveniently begin our study by noting what was the original significance of the term in this connection. Among the political groupings of the world the British Empire stands unique and incapable of exact description by the usual terms of political science. Other organisms can be fitted into categories as republics or monarchies, unitary or federal states, and so on, but the British Empire is *sui generis* and defies inclusion in any of the categories. Its present structure can only be explained by its historical growth, the process by which the sway of the ancient English monarchy has been extended into every continent, so that it now includes every type of state from the most primitive to the most complex.

We call the aggregate an "empire," but it differs widely from any empire known to history. Usually the term has implied centralisation of rule, domination over dependents held down by military force and unity of governmental system. None of these characterise the British Empire, for there is no centralisation, there is no uniformity and there is no domination by the military force of a governing race or caste. But as the outcome of its historic development it possesses one of the traditional attributes of "empire" to the full—its independence of any external authority, and it is for this reason that the King's realms have always been called an

empire in official phraseology ever since the reign of Richard II at the end of the fourteenth century. At that time the Emperor who ruled in Central Europe, the successor of Charlemagne, Otto the Great and Frederick Barbarossa, claimed rights of feudal overlordship over most European monarchs save the kings of England, who marked their independence by asserting their own *imperium*, standing alongside and of equal status with the Holy Roman Empire itself. The idea has been consecrated by more than five centuries of unbroken usage and thus we may claim that this freedom and independence of external interference are the essential characteristics which mark the King's realms rightly as "the British Empire."

Another term of very ancient meaning has also been used down the centuries and this is coming into more and more common use among the British peoples to describe the King's realms. Just as the term "empire" implies freedom from external control, so the term "commonwealth" connotes the possession of internal liberty. All those who belong to the British Commonwealth are sharers in a great partnership not only of rights, but also of duties, and, as they become more and more conscious of this fact, the use of the term "commonwealth" becomes more frequent and more popular.

The other empires of history were mainly founded by military force, but during the last three centuries and above all in the period since the great schism of the American Revolution the British Empire has been expanded far beyond the limits of the United Kingdom, not, mainly, by conquest, as has been too commonly supposed, but by wholly peaceful means. The lands composing the Empire have been acquired mostly by settlement, by treaty and by voluntary cession. Even where the first seeds of empire were planted as the result of war, it is almost entirely upon subsequent peaceful growth that the present importance of the territories depends.

Canada, for example, is often assumed to have been brought within the British Empire by conquest from France in the Seven Years' War, but the modern Dominion of Canada includes a far larger area than the Province of Quebec which was acquired in 1763. The whole of its western provinces have been carved out by settlement in the ancient territories of the Hudson's Bay Company,

which have been the scene of British enterprise since 1670, while British Columbia on the shores of the Pacific was wholly unknown until long after the British flag was planted at Quebec. The acquisition of the Dominion was the result of conquest only in the sense that the forcible annexation of Acadia and New France threw open a vast and vacant hinterland to future settlement by British rather than French colonists. When our period opens, little of that hinterland had been settled, and its occupation has been mainly due to peaceful expansion during the hundred years with which we deal.

The circumstances under which it was alone possible for the immense expansion of British rule to take place in many of the previously unoccupied parts of the world were dependent on the fact that we are an island power. The British Empire is the only empire founded by an island people in the world's history. It could not be a group of continuous continental provinces widening out from a single centre and linked under the uniform rule of a centralised government. The fact that we were a sea-girt people compelled us to guard our integrity with a powerful navy, and once we had secured our own defence against foreign intervention, the ocean lay open for the expansion of our peoples into distant lands. In those lands new seeds of expansion were planted and they have grown up into new nations without undue pressure from the centre, but the new lands of the Empire were inevitably disjointed and scattered and their evolution has been different and directed by local factors in every case. It is to this fact that the immense diversity of the Empire is due, and its unity is to be sought not in uniformity of detail but in the fundamental principles which have governed the evolution of all its parts.

The expansion of the British peoples across the sea has brought about the establishment of two distinct types of colonies—colonies of settlement or, as we now call them, "Dominions," and the colonies proper, which include protectorates. The first type has been planted in temperate regions, where new and flourishing communities of European stock have sprung up, inhabited by men who are carrying on and developing along new lines the culture they brought from their old homes. The second type comprises the tropical dependencies where the control of the white man has been extended over areas which first attracted him for trade, but

in which owing to physical and climatic conditions it is impossible for communities of European stock to thrive. It will aid in our later narrative survey if we summarise a few generalisations concerning each of these types in turn.

The founding of colonies of settlement has been mainly the work of the peoples of the British Isles and those of Spain and Portugal, so that their language and culture are more widely spread over the world than any others. The colonising work of the Dutch has been mainly done in tropical dependencies with the exception of South Africa, and the modern colonies of France are all of the dependent type save in Algeria, where many Frenchmen have settled to carry on life as in their homeland. But there is a striking historic exception to this statement. The Province of Quebec was originally settled by Frenchmen in the seventeenth century, and when it came under the British flag in 1763, it contained only a few thousand inhabitants. But when once a colony has been firmly settled, the language and the culture of the settlers persist and are not displaced even though it passes beneath the control of another Power. In its present character the origin of the colony is more strongly marked than are its subsequent accidents of government. Quebec is inhabited to-day by many times the number of the inhabitants at its cession, but they retain their characteristic French speech and the old French culture. The original stock of the colony has multiplied and flourished and it preserves its separate entity, though it is now surrounded by English-speaking communities. In South Africa, too, the same persistence can be seen. Although the Dutch colony at the Cape of Good Hope became a part of the British Empire more than a century and a quarter ago, there has been no decay or absorption of the stock of the original settlers. They have expanded and prospered alongside the incoming British colonists without losing their language or national characteristics. Mutual modifications have resulted from the contact of the two stocks, but each has contributed a vital element to the growth of a new national entity.

What are the underlying causes that have given to Great Britain a preponderant place as the founder of new nations? Is it true, as it has sometimes been flippantly suggested, that the Empire is but the result of a series of lucky historical accidents into which successive generations of Englishmen have blundered? Or is it the

EMPIRE AND COMMONWEALTH

product of force and greed which its enemies and detractors have often painted? To the historian either of these suggestions is too simple to account for results of such immense magnitude and importance and with such wide diversities of form and character. The search must go deeper into the powerful and obscure currents of world history, but even there it is impossible to discover any clear or simple compulsive cause that has been potent in promoting the growth of the second British Empire that came into being after the break-up of the first mercantile empire by the American Revolution.

One thing, however, is abundantly certain. Military conquest has played little part in the founding of the British Empire. Most of it has been acquired by the wholly peaceful means of settlement, purchase or voluntary cession. The opportunities for planting the seeds of empire have sometimes been found after successful war, but it is upon the subsequent peaceful growth that the present greatness of our colonies depends. The modern Dominion of Canada includes immense territories of which the provinces ceded by France in 1763 are but a corner. The old territories of the Hudson's Bay Company in the North-West in which the western provinces of the Dominion of Canada have been settled, were first discovered by Englishmen and they have always been claimed as British possessions, the region of British Columbia on the shores of the Pacific was unknown when the conquest of French Canada took place in the eighteenth century, and the acquisition of other parts of the Dominion was the result of conquest only in the sense that the forcible annexation of Acadia and New France provided an opportunity for the future settlement of a vast and vacant inland territory by British rather than French colonists. The great island continent of Australia lay wholly fallow when it came beneath the British flag, and the foundations of the great Commonwealth of to-day were laid and its building has been accomplished by a wholly peaceful process. The Dominion of New Zealand, too, has never been the scene of colonising activities by another power, and the Union of South Africa is of enormously greater extent, population and wealth than the tiny settlement at the Cape of Good Hope that passed from Dutch to British sovereignty.

The sea is the life-blood of the British Empire. Upon it England has had to fight the battles that gave her island home

security from invasion, and when that security had been won, the ocean lay open for her sons to pass out over it and found new homes for themselves in unpeopled lands. It seems to have been inevitable that when once Great Britain could establish her sea-power securely and guard herself from invasion or foreign domination, she should find in the means she had employed unrivalled opportunities for colonisation. Throughout the last four centuries sea-power and oversea settlement have been inseparably connected, and in a very real and intimate sense the foremost naval power may be called the "Sea-Commonwealth."

Down to a little more than a century ago the outflow of British emigrants was comparatively small, and most of them went to the American colonies along the Atlantic sea-board. Even when those colonies became independent as the United States, they still remained the goal of the majority of those who passed across the sea from the old country. During the first sixty years of the nineteenth century their numbers steadily increased and they carried their English-born laws and institutions out over the unoccupied plains of the Mississippi Valley and beyond the Rocky Mountains to found new English-speaking communities right across the continent to the shores of the Pacific. It was thither the greater part of the increased stream of emigration flowed after the distress resulting from the Napoleonic wars, but as the population of the British Isles rapidly grew and the tide of emigration rose, a part was directed not to the United States but to new settlements that were founded under the British flag.

The unsettled wilderness of Upper Canada, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia had become the resting-place of the United Empire Loyalists who after the Revolution had left their old homes in the south rather than relinquish their allegiance to the Empire and the ideals it stood for. In the face of immense difficulties and hardships they laid the foundations of new commonwealths and it was to them that many of the new emigrants from the British Isles took their way.

There was little governmental organisation or direction of emigration. The movement was almost entirely one of individuals and families or of small self-organised groups. The emigrants went forth at their own expense to carve out for themselves opportunities that they could not find in the crowded competition and

the economic pressure in their old homes. They were imbued with a determination to better their fortunes, and it is in this spontaneous initiative and energy of a multitude of individual emigrants that the secret of much of British colonising capacity can be found. The Englishmen and Scotsmen of the nineteenth century were aggressive and self-reliant pioneers who were impatient of governmental interference with their traditional independence of initiative, but greatly valued the law and order which were characteristic of British rule. For centuries Englishmen had been accustomed to govern themselves and they lost none of their capacity in their new homes. From the very beginning, therefore, the new communities could draw upon the stores of ability among their members for the management of local affairs, and they wanted as little interference as possible from centralising officials.

Colonists did not follow the flag; they pushed forward into new fields from the centres that had been first annexed, and the flag had to follow them despite the reluctance of the Home Government to extend its territorial responsibilities. The colonists had often to be protected from their temerity in the face of savage enemies or from the danger of clashes with the interests of foreign Powers, and then they were reluctantly prepared to acquiesce in some governmental control. Long before a new colony was strong enough to manage the larger affairs of government, and while it was still dependent upon the help of trained officials, every new community could find among its own inhabitants men who could manage its local business honestly and well, and many of the irritating differences that arose in the early history of the colonies of settlement came from the feeling that local experience was too often neglected by those appointed by the central authority. As individual pioneers pushed out the frontiers of civilisation into the wilderness by their own energy and determination to face and overcome obstacles, they took their traditional methods of British organisation with them, and so it was not a mass of heterogeneous and disconnected units that was scattering into the wilderness from every new centre of colonisation but a real outgrowth of essentially British communities. It is in this innate capacity for self-management and the traditional British respect for law and order that we have undoubtedly prime factors in the rapid extension of the colonies of settlement. Combined with the individual

initiative and energy of the pioneers they were of cardinal importance.

In the early days of a young colony there is an insistent demand for capital and credit both for private business and for the carrying-on of the necessary business of government. To supply this latter demand the colonists had to draw upon the resources of the British tax-payer, and even in the days of most bitter complaint against the Colonial Office the accounts of the British Exchequer show how much those who were loudest in their grievances were dependent for help and defence upon subventions from the Home Government. The early and rapid growth of the British colonies of settlement in the nineteenth century was rendered possible only by the concurrent increase in demand among the rapidly rising population in Great Britain, for the commodities they were especially adapted to produce. The homeland, too, had a surplus of capital that she was only too ready to lend to her colonists for the construction of roads, canals and railways, for the breaking-up of new land and the purchase of manufactured articles that kept British factories busy. The demands on either side of the ocean were complementary, and so it is largely to causes like these that we must look to explain the reasons for the rapid expansion of the British Empire in the temperate regions rather than to reasons to be found in purely political history. Granted the preliminary conditions of security based upon sea-power and freedom from international complications, the expansion of the British colonies of settlement in the nineteenth century is seen to have been inevitable owing to the economic causes that were moulding the world during the long period of extra-European peace.

In subsequent chapters we shall have to trace the political growth of the colonies of settlement in some detail, but here we may take that for granted while we say something of the broad lines along which these economic movements developed.

The political growth of a new community is only possible when that community can find material means to support itself and can produce commodities that will command a ready sale in great markets. The consolidation of the British colonies in the nineteenth century was greatly assisted by economic circumstances in Europe. The industrial revolution made Great Britain the workshop of the world with an insatiable appetite for raw materials to

keep her factories running. As we have said, these raw materials the new colonies were especially fitted to supply and the profits the colonists made went to purchase manufactured goods from British factories and so to increase trade. The rapid increase in the national wealth, especially after about 1850, provided a supply of capital that was readily invested in the goods required to promote colonial enterprises. So the material means of civilisation, railways, docks, harbours, agricultural machinery, etc., could be provided from loans and paid for by the increased facility of production and transportation. At the very period when the demand for colonial produce was greatly on the increase, the discovery of great new goldfields in California, Australia and British Columbia came to stimulate the outflow of emigration, and the gold rushes added rapidly to the population of the colonies. A few years later as Great Britain, owing to her absorption in manufacturing, became less and less able to feed her population, so she required to import the wheat and other foodstuffs that her colonies were peculiarly fitted to supply, and here again there was found a source of mutual wealth. The processes of political and material growth was interdependent and only peace could make them secure. With the exception of the unimportant interlude of the Crimean War, the British Empire was never engaged in war with a European Power for a clear century from 1815 to 1914. But while the continuity of her peaceful development was unbroken each one of her possible competitors was troubled again and again by revolutions and major wars. Alone among the Great Powers the British Empire behind the sure shield of the navy was left to till the vacant spaces of the world without interference, and it is in this fact that we have the undeniable cause of the success of our people in building up new colonies of settlement to become gradually as they developed the homes of new, young nations.

In the process of that development each colony of settlement became wholly responsible for its own government under the aegis of the Crown, the only remaining representative of the Imperial Government being the Governor or Governor-General, who is entirely guided in all his public actions by the advice of ministers responsible to the elected assembly. Among all the devices of political invention that have sprung from the peoples that speak English none has been of greater importance to the

world than this "Responsible Government." One by one the colonies of settlement have taken over the management of their internal affairs, the burden of their own defence and the direction of their commercial relations with foreign Powers.

As the colonies in particular geographical areas progressed under their new responsibilities, they found themselves seriously impeded by common difficulties which were dangerously increased by the different policies adopted by adjacent governments for the solution of the problems raised. Some closer association for common action was urged upon them by the Imperial Government but local jealousies stood in the way, and it was not until action became imperative that local patriotism gave way before wider interests and agreement could be reached. Ultimately in each area a solution was found by negotiation and the great self-governing Dominions were formed on the initiative of the statesmen who were responsible for the government of the previously independent units. With the sanction and approval of the Imperial Government but not upon its prompting the political device of federation was adopted in each great area, modelled largely on the experience of the United States. So by negotiation between the rival local interests the Dominion of Canada was formed in 1867 to merge into one the colonies of settlement in British North America, the Commonwealth of Australia in 1900, including all the previously separate States, and the Union of South Africa in 1909. The Imperial Government in each case relinquished the last remnants of the influence it had had to maintain while the colonies were divided, but there was no weakening of the ties of sentiment between the new Dominions and the Empire. There was a change in the character of these relations between the virile young nations that came into being and the dependent wards which the separate colonies had been. The Dominions were now grouped round the central kingdom in voluntary association for common purposes, and the only legal tie that was left was a common allegiance to the Crown, the universally accepted symbol of Imperial unity. One side of the story that we have to tell in the following pages will be concerned with the gradual rise of the colonies of settlements to the national status of the self-governing Dominions of the modern British Empire-Commonwealth, and it covers very closely the

period of one hundred years with which we are dealing.

The rise of the Dominions fills the predominant place during the first half of that period, for with the exception of the West Indian islands which remained after the break-up of the old empire there were very few dependent colonies of the second type. The history of the second part of our period, however, is largely concerned with the very rapid development of our dependent empire and the international problems in which it had been involved. The new period began in the 'seventies after the close of the Franco-Prussian war. European affairs then became locked in the condition of unstable balance in which they were to remain for a generation. Room for the gratification of territorial ambitions could only be found overseas and Britain's freedom from dangerous rivalry in the colonial field was bound to come to an end. The Americas were protected against European annexations by the Monroe Doctrine in defence of which it was certain that the United States would take serious action; the temperate regions of the Old World were fully delimited and there was no unallocated area that was fitted to be the home of new colonies of settlement for white men. The race for new territories must be directed towards the unannexed tropical lands in Africa and the Pacific where in the earlier period British enterprise had had little dangerous competition. Any new colonies that were founded must of necessity be of the tropical type and must involve problems of government of primitive tribes in which Great Britain alone had had experience on a large scale in South Africa.

Down to 1870 the European demand for tropical commodities was little more diversified than it had been in the eighteenth century and it was satisfied with the produce of the West Indies and South America and of the Dutch and British possessions in Asia. The interior of Africa was gradually being revealed by the exertions of travellers and missionaries but its exports were of so little value and the cost in life and money of the maintenance of the few British possessions that had survived from the days of the slave trade was so great, that it was seriously proposed in the 'sixties that they should be abandoned. The next twenty-five years saw a vast change. France began to develop her African possessions with vigour as an outlet for the energies of her soldiers and administrators and to annex new territories as some compensation

for her losses in Europe. Bismarck unleashed the ambitions of the theoretical enthusiasts for colonial power as the mark of a great nation, and British statesmen had to realise that if our trade were not to be shut out from great areas that had been revealed by the efforts of our explorers, their persistent refusal to accept new colonial responsibilities must be reconsidered.

The Liberal Ministry of the early 'eighties came into office with the loudly proclaimed and sincere intention of limiting British commitments in the colonial sphere, but—by one of the ironies of history—during their term of office a larger extent of territory and a greater population were added to the British Empire than in any similar period. By the middle of the 'nineties almost the whole of tropical Africa and nearly every island group in the Pacific came under the flag of one or other of the European Powers. Owing to her previous interests in unoccupied territories and to the world-wide expansion of her commerce Great Britain came out of the scramble with a very large share of the new annexations and the area of the British Empire was widely extended with new problems that demanded very different methods of government from the colonies of settlement.

It cannot be claimed that the new acquisitions at first provided much evidence of Britain's especial aptitude in the sphere of colonisation such as had been amply proved in the Dominions. The annexations were made as a by-product of the peculiar circumstances of the "armed peace" in world politics, but only a very few years were needed to show that British experience in the government of an Asiatic empire gave us a striking lead in the development of tropical dependencies. One of the first and most outstanding examples was provided in south-eastern Asia. In the middle of the nineteenth century the Malay Peninsula was still a tangle of dense tropical jungle exporting little or nothing of value. It was divided among a number of petty chieftains engaged in incessant savage warfare alternating with piracy. But without the exertion of any armed force, by the application of the experience that had been learned in the native states of India, a few British officials effected a profound change. Before the close of the century Malaya had become one of the most prosperous regions in Asia. The advance of metallurgy and of the electrical industry caused a great demand for tin of which Malaya has great supplies, while she

was the earliest country to produce plantation rubber required for cycles and automobiles. Thus the advance of material equipment in Europe has been aided by the entirely peaceful work of bringing order and good government to the Malay in a way that could never have been achieved before he came under the British flag.

Tropical Africa, the principal scene of the new colonial rivalry, is densely inhabited by negro tribes who in their primitive barbarism knew nothing of the outer world and contributed little to the resources of mankind. But when peace from their tribal wars was brought to them under the orderly government of a British colony or protectorate and the energies of the people were wisely guided they began to yield to the men of temperate climes new tropical products which are essential for the material advance of modern communities. In exchange they received increasing supplies of manufactured goods and so furnished new markets for the sale of European goods. British colonial administrators found that the surest way of promoting prosperity among the natives lay not in the system of plantations under European ownership worked by landless labourers but in fostering native industries in the growing of suitable products.

This could only be carried on when good and orderly government was assured, and this has been supplied by comparatively small numbers of white officials. The new dependencies could never be colonies of settlement, and only a few missionaries, planters and traders came in behind the administrators. These only stay for a while, for they cannot rear families in the tropics. When they retire they return to their own land, and their places are filled by new recruits. Thus no permanent white community is established, and so the development of the tropical colonies has been quite different from that of the Dominions. But just as the story of the first part of our period was in the main one of experiment in finding satisfactory forms of government for colonies of the first type, so that of the second part has been filled with experiments in the government and economic development of tropical colonies, and so there are two parallel sides to our theme. They are not divergent, for the fundamental principles underlying each series of experiments are the same, but the two sides of the Empire's history in the nineteenth century have little influence one

upon the other, and we shall find that they must be traced separately.

There is a third section of our work that is of outstanding importance, but also must be treated separately from the other two. This is the progress of Britain's work in India. It has not been a work of colonisation, for India is not a colony either of the first or the second type, though it is the most populous and one of the essential parts of the British Empire oversea and so comes properly within our subject. In point of population India exceeds all the rest of the Empire put together, but it is not for that reason that we speak of Britain's work in India as one of the greatest of her accomplishments. The infinite diversity and complexity of the problems of government that she has had to face there have given her a more difficult task than has ever been undertaken by any nation in the history of the world, and her success in dealing with them and giving order and good government to hundreds of millions has left an indelible mark both upon India and upon Britain herself. There can be no doubt that, if she had not undertaken that task and carried it through, the history of the last century and a half would have been very different both for Britain and India and for the world as a whole.

When Englishmen first began to rule over large Indian territories in the time of Clive and Warren Hastings their desire was not for glory or sovereignty but the protection of peaceful and profitable trade. Civilisation in India had fallen so deep into anarchy and misgovernment amid the wars of the rival military adventurers who were struggling for the fragments of the Mogul Empire that trade was brought almost to a standstill. Famine and epidemics had depopulated vast areas, and they were constantly recurrent. The English first took sides in the quarrels of the Indian princes because they found that their trade would be suppressed and excluded by their French rivals who sought for political influence to further their exclusive commercial designs. The East India Company only assumed territorial responsibilities with great reluctance to frustrate these French designs, for they feared that the expenses of government would swallow up all their commercial profits, as in fact was the case. But having begun they had to go on, and so gradually the frontier dams against the flood of anarchy were pushed forward until by the time when our period

opens, all India from the Sutlej to Cape Comorin had been brought within the *Pax Britannica*. Order had been imposed through all that vast region, and war had ceased its devastations. The Indian side of our story will have little, save at the period of the Mutiny, to tell of military action, for there has been none within the frontiers. It is one of gradual political, social and economic development as the provinces of British India first and then the Native States have progressed in the adaptation of their ancient institutions under the import of Western material equipment. Railways and telegraphs, machinery, banking and modern commercial needs under the guidance and management of men of British stock but mainly through the agency of Indian leaders, have made profound changes from one end of India to another, and our principal concern will be to show something of how this has gone on. Parallel with these changes we shall have something to say of the way in which the achievements of Western science have been applied to improve public health, irrigation and agriculture, so that India is no longer devastated by the famines and the ravages of disease as she was before Britain began her imperial work. We shall, of course, have to speak too of the governmental reforms that have lain behind these material accomplishments, for it was the peace that was brought by the British *Raj* that alone rendered them possible.

But, as in the Dominions and the colonies of the dependent empire so in India, political progress is only one part of the story of the last hundred years and possibly not the most important. Progress in material civilisation and the ideas of order, good government and individual liberty have been the gifts of the Empire-Commonwealth to all its members, and it is with the story of how this has come about that we shall be largely concerned. Our method of treatment will not be geographical as it is in many books on the subject. If that method is adopted and the history of each part of the Empire is traced independently in succession, it fatally obscures the integral unity of the story. Our treatment will be broadly chronological, dealing with the principal and significant movements of each period as they came into prominence and looking at them in each case from the United Kingdom, the central realm, outwards. Thus the movement for responsible government which is an essential part of Canadian history takes on

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a different aspect when it is considered from the imperial standpoint and is used for comparison with the less prominent movement for the same reform in other parts of the Empire. Experiments in land policy were more noteworthy in Australia than elsewhere and native relations are best traced in South Africa. So, as we treat successive topics in order of time we shall be carried from one part of the Empire to another and advance a little in date beyond the point we have reached in the general story. But we must return to that point when we take up the main sequence of events again, if we are not to leave unbridged gaps. This method of treatment brings out that there is really a history of the Empire as a whole, which is more than the sum total of the history of each of its parts. Each of those parts, it is true, has its own history and had its own course of development, but so had the Empire-Commonwealth as a unity and that is here the subject of our study.

CHAPTER II

THE COLONIES AT THE ACCESSION OF QUEEN VICTORIA

To the Englishmen of a century ago their relations with the British Empire beyond the seas were matters of much less concern than they had been to their grandfathers sixty years before, and they filled but a comparatively small part of their thoughts on public affairs. In the 'seventies and 'eighties of the eighteenth century the disputes with the American colonists had brought colonial questions into the very forefront of British politics, while the controversies over the government of Bengal and the other territories in India which Clive's conquests had added to the Empire occupied a large part of the time of Parliament. Burke's furious invective, as he pressed on the impeachment of Warren Hastings for misgovernment in India, made the problems of the management of distant dependencies a frequent subject of discussion among most politically-minded Englishmen. But after the disasters of the American war had culminated in the break-up of the Old Empire by the Peace of Versailles (1783), colonial questions fell far into the background and only specialists concerned themselves with the government of the scattered remnants of Britain's dependencies beyond the sea. Debates on colonial affairs in Parliament became rare, and they attracted little public interest or attention. The newspapers and the reviews gave little space to news of the outer Empire, which seemed of negligible importance compared with the affairs of Europe as they moved at an accelerating rate towards the outbreak of the great wars.

The causes of this lack of general public interest in colonial affairs are obvious. The most populous parts of the Old Empire had broken away to form a new power as the United States of America and the fragments that were left were mostly West Indian sugar islands that were always complaining of their declining prosperity and begging help from the over-burdened British taxpayer. The disastrous results of the American Revolution were regarded with shame and regret by the average Englishman, and for many years he looked with dislike on the

"colonials" as renegades who had deserted their natural allegiance and cruelly mistreated those of their fellow citizens who remained loyal to the great idea of a "United Empire." It was distasteful thoughts such as these that made the average Englishman shy of colonial affairs and anxious to leave them aside to be dealt with by specialists.

Immediately after the schism some theorists who had been active sympathisers with the revolted Americans proposed to abandon the disconnected fragments of the Old Empire that remained beneath the British flag and to reduce the territories of the Crown to the limits of the central islands. But the advocates of withdrawal attracted little support. The ordinary Englishman had a sense of wounded pride that would not allow him to abandon those who had stood by the Crown in the Revolutionary struggle, and he had, too, a fear that anything he left would fall into the hands of his ancient enemies, France and Spain, to augment their powers of competition with his trade and their resources for war. A policy of "scuttle" was therefore never seriously taken up by responsible statesmen and, long before a new war with France began, the national spirit had recovered from the worst of the American shock and was resolved that Britain still had a future before her as a great colonising power. The details of colonial problems might be distasteful and neglected, but on the broad principles the vast majority of Englishmen even at the lowest ebb of imperial sentiment immediately after the schism felt more sympathy with the aspirations of a pioneer like Admiral Arthur Phillip, the founder of New South Wales as the outpost of a new British Empire, than with the "Little Englandism" of the economic theorists.

It was generally realised in the last generation of the eighteenth century that the old idea of a colonial empire as a profitable commercial investment had been exploded. If the British taxpayer desired to retain the colonies that were left and even to extend them, as he did during the great wars, he must be prepared to pay for his wish. None of the colonies was prosperous enough to pay its own way, let alone provide for its own defence, and one of the most deeply learned lessons of the American Revolution was that Parliament could not safely undertake the taxation of the colonies. But the nation as a whole was willing to assume the

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financial responsibility; the whole burden of the debt that had been incurred was shouldered by the United Kingdom without any demand for colonial contributions; the Navy, the essential defence of the Empire, was wholly supported from British funds, and wherever garrisons had to be maintained in the colonies they were supplied by British troops and paid for from the Exchequer.

To sum up the outlook upon imperial problems of the generation that had reached adult age at the accession of Queen Victoria, we may say that the colonies were regarded as something of a burden and something of an irksome duty, but a burden and a duty that were borne as part of the heritage of a great and proud nation. Gain, the old commercial motive of colonisation, had gone, and there was left instead a shy and little expressed imperial patriotism that was willing to pay for its treasuring up of the remnants of old glories, but was not particularly ready to talk about them. Sentiment undoubtedly played a large part in the thoughts of Englishmen about the Empire during the great wars when the seeds of new colonies were being sown. There was no desire to extend our dependencies with their necessary responsibilities for the sake of glory, but we were determined to resist the aggrandisement of our old enemy France, and Englishmen believed that, if she again became prominent in the colonial field, our trade would inevitably be crippled. International rivalry and strategical considerations dictated which of the colonial conquests should be retained in the peace settlement, but it was not there that the most difficult problems of colonial government were found.

Even while the wars were raging in Europe, a peaceful and unimpeded tide of emigration, partly of free men and partly of transported convicts, was flowing into new colonies of settlement. New centres were established from which expansion might press into unoccupied lands as more and more settlers came out across the oceans. Thus the bounds of the Empire were extended without military conquest and it was in those new colonies of settlement that the most difficult problems of government presented themselves to the early Victorians. They called for new methods for their solution, and the general public heard little of what was going on. The experiments that were tried by the colonial administrators only attracted their attention when they failed so badly as to produce a popular outcry in the colonies. Even in

regard to the long-standing questions of colonial government the methods of the eighteenth century had proved faulty and new precedents had to be laid down. The time was essentially one of reform and political invention in a scattered and diversified field. It differed widely from the comparative homogeneity of the old Empire, and the only link between the many experiments that had to be tried to fit government to the needs of the governed was the temper in which they were made and the principles the Governors and the Colonial Office strove to apply. What those principles were and how they were interpreted will appear in the course of our survey.

- At the accession of Queen Victoria in 1837 the extent of the territories oversea that owed her allegiance already differed widely from what it had been after the schism fifty years before. Leaving India aside, the British dependencies in the eighteenth century were confined to the coasts and islands of the North Atlantic. The outer empire before 1783 was almost wholly American, and when the most populous part of it, the thirteen Continental colonies, broke away, the dependencies that remained were separated into two widely scattered groups. In the north there were the regions generally called British North America, in the south the scattered island dependencies in the Caribbean. The oldest British settlement in the first group was the fishing station of Newfoundland with its dependency of Labrador on the mainland. The island was quite exceptional in its character and government, for it was not treated like a colony, but after the fashion of a great ship moored in the Atlantic near the Banks for the convenience of certain fishermen. During the 'thirties this anomaly was removed as far as its constitution was concerned, and an ordinary colonial constitution was granted to the island, but Newfoundland remained in a peculiar position among the territories of the Empire with special problems of its own.

The Maritime provinces of British North America—Nova Scotia and Cape Breton, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick, were also interested in fishery questions, but in these they were overshadowed by problems of agricultural settlement and general trade. Both banks of the St. Lawrence River in the lower part of its course were the home of the French population of Quebec or

Lower Canada, strung out in lines of settlements that were none of them very far removed from the river. Further up river in the lands on the north bank and in the peninsula between the Great Lakes lay the English-speaking settlements of Upper Canada, the most important colony in the new empire. Those settlements were built up by the refugee United Empire Loyalists from the United States, and their politics and interests derived both from British and American precedents.

In the interior of the continent away from the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes there were British rights but practically no civilised population, save in the distant settlements upon the Red River where Lord Selkirk had made a disastrous attempt to found a new colony. The only other white men in the interior were the factors, trappers and fur-traders of the Hudson's Bay Company, who in their isolated posts round the Bay and on the inland waterways were carrying on barter for furs with the Red Indian savages. The most remote of the posts was beyond the Rocky Mountains, where in New Caledonia (later called British Columbia) on the Pacific the beginnings of trade had been opened up in small posts lying between the Russian lands to the north and the Spaniards of California to the south.

The oldest colony that still remained in the Empire after the schism was in the small island group of the Bermudas, whose settlement had begun in 1615 and which possessed the oldest representative assembly in the Empire after the Parliament at Westminster. The colony was poor and mainly of importance as a base for the naval squadron on the North American Station. To the south of the Bermudas lay another group of island colonies, the Bahamas, which were also poor and of comparatively small importance.

The old colonies of the British West Indies fell into three groups, first Jamaica with certain small dependencies, second the Leeward Islands including St. Christopher, Nevis, Montserrat and Antigua, and thirdly the Windward Islands and Barbados. Many of the Windward Islands had often changed hands in the naval wars of the eighteenth century, and there were many French survivals in them. However, as the final result, by the treaties that closed the Napoleonic wars, Dominica, Grenada, St. Vincent, St. Lucia and Tobago were permanently absorbed into the Empire, and Trinidad was taken from Spain. .

On the coast of Central America there was an anomalous settlement in Belize (later called British Honduras) which had been built up as the result of the long struggle between the logwood cutters of Yucatan and the Spaniards. Various shadowy British claims remained in the region, in the Bay Islands and on the Mosquito Coast, as the vestiges of eighteenth-century conflicts, and these claims still left some questions of substance to be decided in relation to a general Caribbean policy, though they were of negligible importance compared with what they had been during the period of the old Empire.

The principal additions that were made to the Empire as the result of the settlement after the Napoleonic wars, were the colony of Trinidad taken from Spain, and the plantations of Berbice, Essequibo and Demerara, ceded by the Dutch, which were later combined into the single colony of British Guiana. There were many problems of government to be dealt with in these new Crown colonies, both political and social in regard to their slave population. There was, save in the interior of British North America, practically no remnant of the original native population left in any of the colonies thus enumerated, and so before the 'thirties the problems of government of primitive peoples had hardly arisen, though later in our period they were to present questions of the greatest difficulty and importance. However, the British West Indies were faced by an allied problem of absorbing significance, the relations between the white planters and the negroes, who had been introduced from Africa in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and upon whose slave labour the prosperity of the "Sugar Islands" had been founded. This problem presented the most widely known and fiercely argued subject of controversy in colonial affairs at the opening of our period as we shall see in our next chapter.

Turning to the European side of the Atlantic, there were three British dependencies, each acquired for its strategic importance and governed as a military fortress lying apart from the general line of colonial development. Gibraltar had been in British hands since 1704 and commanded the entrance to the Mediterranean, while Malta provided a base for the British fleet in those waters. Their significance in relation to the communications of the Empire greatly increased with the development of the route to India

through the Red Sea which was being undertaken in earnest when our period opens. The small island of Heligoland was taken in the Napoleonic wars to command the entrance to the German rivers, and though it was retained at the peace, it had little importance in British hands. The British protectorate in the Ionian Islands, near the mouth of the Adriatic, was not regarded as a dependency, for by treaty the islands were recognised as an independent republic, and the British forces that garrisoned them were only present to protect that independence. The history of the islands, therefore, lies apart from the colonial sphere.

The British dependencies in West Africa were confined to the coast and were occupied solely for the carrying-on of trade. Attempts had been made after the Peace of Paris in 1763 to form a real territorial dominion in Senegambia, but they ended in disastrous failure, and after the return of the posts on the Senegal to France in 1783 only the small post of James Fort on the River Gambia remained. A little to the south was the settlement of Sierra Leone, established as a free colony by a group of philanthropists under a chartered company but taken over by the Crown in 1809. On the Gold Coast there were a few English factories, of which the most important was Cape Coast Castle, but in no case was there any territorial possession, and British rule was solely confined to the immediate neighbourhood of the small forts.

The essential route of communication of the Empire was that by sea to India and it was in its defence that three important new posts were occupied during the great wars and retained at the peace. In each case they had been colonised or occupied earlier by other nations, and so their government involved the same problem that had had to be dealt with in Canada, that of ruling a white population of non-British stock. At the Cape of Good Hope, the most important of the three, the earlier white inhabitants were of Dutch ancestry, but their practical isolation for more than a century and a half had produced a considerable differentiation between them and the people of the Netherlands. The Afrikaners had become indeed a people with special characteristics of their own, and this was to lead to certain momentous happenings at the very beginning of our period, as we shall see later. The Cape was occupied by the British at first and retained at the peace only because of its strategic importance in relation to the route to

India, but its annexation brought with it a whole train of new problems and especially that of governing large numbers of Hottentots and later Kaffirs in the tribal stage such as had never had to be dealt with on any considerable scale in the old Empire. This was to provide one of the most difficult tasks of colonial government for the next hundred years.

The island of St. Helena in the South Atlantic had been used as a refreshment station for the ships of the East India Company since its annexation in 1652, but it first came into prominence after 1815, when it was used as the place of exile of the fallen Emperor Napoleon. At that time Tristan d'Acunha and Ascension were occupied to prevent any possible use of those islands to further his escape. The group of the Falkland Islands lying in the western part of the South Atlantic had been first occupied by the British in the latter part of the eighteenth century, but little use was made of them, and they were not re-occupied until 1832 when they were made the base of the British ships engaged in the protection of the whale fishery and for surveys off the coast of South America. A civil administration was established in 1843.

Mauritius, with its dependencies, the Seychelles and Rodriguez, was occupied in 1810 to remove the great danger to our communications in the Indian Ocean which had arisen in the latter half of the eighteenth century when it was used by the French as a naval base and a harbourage for their privateers. The white population was French in stock, working its sugar plantations with large numbers of negro slaves as in a West Indian island. The problems of its government were similar, therefore, to those which had to be faced in the Caribbean.

The third important new dependency acquired on the route to India during the Napoleonic wars was Ceylon, and this island was occupied in 1795 mainly for the sake of its valuable naval harbour of Trincomali, which in enemy hands would have been a serious menace to our communications with Southern India. It had first been occupied by the Portuguese and later by the Dutch, but neither power went further than the coastal strip, and the interior remained under the rule of its native Kings of Kandy. The earlier white inhabitants offered little difficulty to Ceylon's new British governors, but the problem of governing its Asiatic population

was in many respects similar to those which had to be dealt with in British India and needed much experiment.

On the eastern side of the Indian Ocean the China trade was becoming every year more important, and it was the last sphere in which the East India Company preserved its commercial monopoly. The stream of traffic passed in both directions through the narrow Straits of Malacca between the island of Sumatra and the mainland of the Malay Peninsula. Those waters were infested by pirates, and to guard its ships from their depredations the East India Company in 1786 had purchased the small island of Penang at the northern entrance to the straits and there had erected a post. This was the beginning of the later Straits Settlements, but Penang was not very successful and the old citadel of Malacca, which had been taken from the Dutch during the wars, was unsuitable for the larger ships used in the eastern trade. In 1819 the island of Singapore was acquired from Johore by Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles and it later became the centre of British activities in Malaya, for its admirable strategic situation commanded all traffic through the Straits.

The dispute with Holland as to the extent of her rights in the Archipelago was brought to an end by agreement in 1823-4 when the spheres of activity of the two powers were delimited, and British expansion was thereafter mostly confined to the mainland, the islands being left to the Dutch.

In 1837 the only other colonies of the British Empire lay far away from the possessions of any other European power at the remote antipodes. The island groups of the Pacific were still without any civilised government, though they had been the goal of European traders for half a century, and had seen various proselytising attempts by British and French missionaries. But on the south-eastern coast of the island continent of New Holland there had been a penal settlement belonging to the British Government since 1788, and there had gradually grown up round it a prosperous colony in New South Wales, whose capital, Sydney, had become during the first quarter of the nineteenth century the most important port in the South Pacific. The island of Van Diemen's Land was a penal settlement under New South Wales and their development was closely associated. At the opposite extremity of Australia, however, in the Swan River Settlements a new

colonising experiment was started in 1829 which was designed from the first entirely as a colony of free men. South Australia was also in its earliest stage as a free settlement, but elsewhere the great island continent was entirely unoccupied. Great Britain had shown, however, that she was determined to extend her sovereignty over the whole, though by 1837 so little had been done outside the south-eastern corner to make her occupation effective.

Fifty years after the break-up of the old empire it was abundantly clear that a far more widely distributed system of British colonies was arising with immense possibilities of future development. There were certain governing factors that made such a vast outgrowth from the many scattered seedlings of colonisation possible, and these sprang from world events. Granted the general course of history, they were inevitable.

To defend herself from invasion by the armies of Revolutionary France and to protect the oversea commerce by which she lived, Great Britain had developed her navy to such a pitch of strength that at the peace it held an unchallenged supremacy. In part that supremacy was won as the result of great naval victories like those of the Nile and Trafalgar, but to consolidate it had been the work of the many detached squadrons during the last ten years of the war while our maritime power was practically blockading the whole of Europe from communication with the outer world. During that long blockade the fighting navies of every other nation, save the Americans, and their mercantile marines dwindled into insignificance. By far the greater part of extra-European commerce passed into British hands and, as a consequence, British merchants found themselves without competitors in most parts of the outer world and could build up their interests unimpeded.

The troubles in Europe were largely responsible for the downfall of the two oldest colonial empires in the world, for the Spanish and the Portuguese colonies in America began their struggle for independence while the home countries were in the occupation of foreign armies. By 1837 that struggle was over, and both Spain and Portugal had practically ceased to be great colonial powers. The Kingdom of Holland held most of the possessions that had belonged to the old Republic of the United Provinces, but there was clearly no prospect of further expansion.

France had been among the greatest and most progressive colonial powers in the eighteenth century, but she had lost almost all her former possessions and seemed to have little interest in expansion overseas. It is true that in 1830 she took the first step that indicated a revival of her colonial ambitions in the occupation of Algiers, but it was not until some years later that she was ready to go further.

Thus Britain with her unchallenged sea power and her freedom from foreign rivals in the colonial field was at liberty to expand her territory overseas practically where and how she would, without fear of European opposition. That she was reluctant to do so and only annexed fresh territory for definite and immediately practical reasons was due to the fact we have already mentioned, that colonies were regarded as a burden imposing fresh liabilities on an overtaxed nation. It was for that reason that every Cabinet, to whatever party it belonged, was resolutely opposed to the extension of the Empire and was accused by colonial enthusiasts of timidity and indifference to the interests of our imperial heritage. The crude ideas of those who held that the addition of more and more square miles to be painted red upon the map added to Britain's power and glory made no appeal to the statesmen and their permanent officials who had to persuade a reluctant Treasury to provide them with the money to defend and police every fragment of territory absorbed. This essential hostility of the Colonial Office to shouldering new responsibilities was thoroughly ingrained at the very beginning of our period, and it goes a long way to explain what has always been taken to be its characteristic attitude in every colonial crisis.

The spokesman for colonial affairs in the Cabinet and in Parliament was the Secretary of State for War and Colonies, but the work was so departmentalised that there was little interference between his dual functions, and in a time of peace his work in the Colonial Office was far the more important. But the office was distinctly inferior in dignity and political influence to those of the other two Secretaries of State, for Home and Foreign Affairs respectively. It did not attract the most prominent and influential candidates for office, but was usually left to be filled by a personality of the second rank who for his services to the party must be included in the Cabinet but could not be allotted one of its plums.

Ambitious men looked upon the office as a stepping stone to something better, and for three-quarters of a century Colonial Secretaries and Parliamentary Under-Secretaries followed one another in rapid succession with very short tenures of office in most cases. This left little opportunity for them to make much impress upon policy, and so we find the influence of the professional head of the office, the Permanent Under-Secretary, of unusual importance. This was particularly the case at the beginning of our period, during the formative years of the new empire.

James Stephen, who filled the office from 1836 to 1847, was hereditarily disposed to an interest in colonial affairs, for his father, James Stephen the elder, was one of the most active protagonists in the struggle for the abolition of the slave trade, and he grew to manhood in a circle where questions relating to the outer empire were matters of constant debate. He came into official contact with the colonies when he was appointed in 1826 as Legal Adviser to the Colonial Office, and his influence in that important position at once began to be felt. In 1834 he was made Assistant Under-Secretary, serving under Robert William Hay, who had first become Under-Secretary during the long and very conservative régime of Earl Bathurst, a Tory of the old school, who held the Colonial Secretaryship in the long-lived ministry of Lord Liverpool from 1812 to 1827. Stephen's influence at once made itself felt. He became Permanent Under-Secretary in 1836 and thenceforward until his retirement in 1847 he served under six Secretaries of State, none of whom held office for more than four years. The impress that Stephen planted on colonial policy and administration during those formative years can hardly be over-estimated, and his influence was certainly prolonged during at least the first part of the tenure of office of Herman Merivale, his pupil and successor, who served from 1847 to 1859. There can be no doubt that in Stephen we must recognise one of the greatest of the founders of the new empire who left an indelible mark upon its development.

The idea that the British Government and the Colonial Office were dictatorial and tyrannical in their treatment of the colonies is undoubtedly false. That they were unprogressive and lacking in imagination in colonial government is true, but Cabinets and colonial Governors alike were animated by a strong sense of duty

and they were doing their best to carry out their tasks with justice, and fairness both to the colonists and to the British taxpayer who had to pay a large share of the cost. In 1837 and for some years later many of the Governors were Peninsular veterans trained under the great Duke of Wellington, and they carried on into their governments the methods of order and discipline that they had learned in their early service.

The one outstanding personality among the Colonial Secretaries of the time was William Huskisson, who, though he only held the office for six months in 1827-8 in the ministries of Goderich and Wellington, was undoubtedly the herald of the new era in colonial policy. The old ideal of a self-contained and self-sufficing empire was shown to be undesirable, for the United States after they had broken away continued to be as good customers of Great Britain as ever. In return it was impossible to refuse them entrance into the trade of the West Indies, though it was manifestly contrary to the provisions of the Acts of Trade which confined colonial commerce to British ships. Monopoly was abandoned in favour of imperial preference, and Huskisson lowered the import duties charged in Great Britain on colonial produce while he retained and in some cases increased the bounties on certain goods like timber. If free trade within the Empire could be attained and all hampering restrictions upon intercourse swept away, Huskisson believed that unity of sentiment and community of interests would be promoted by general freedom. Narrow and exclusive commercial privileges had failed as bonds of empire, and Huskisson, like Adam Smith, believed that by their abolition the prosperity of all the Empire's citizens would be promoted, while the old sense of colonial inferiority was removed and all felt themselves partners for the common good. In the expression of such ideas, the inspiring principles of the new empire, Huskisson was a pioneer. His sudden death in 1830 carried him off before he could carry the whole of his colonial plans into effect, but his influence upon the Tory party remained. He had broken down the narrow and unprogressive policy of Bathurst's era and struck a new note of freedom in imperial relations. The Whigs, the traditional partisans of liberty, had therefore no monopoly of progressive ideas in relation to the Empire, and so, fortunately, colonial affairs did not at that critical time become the plaything of

British party politics. Divisions of opinion in regard to them rarely followed party lines and this was of incalculable importance in imperial development for many years.

The division between the colonies of settlement and the dependencies was not yet clear when our period begins, for the West Indian colonies that had survived from the old empire still possessed the representative forms of government which came down from the seventeenth century. Their white inhabitants still persisted vigorously in their claims to legislative independence of Parliamentary control which had led to so many disputes before the American Revolution. But economic and social causes had made it impossible for the Home Government to listen any longer to those claims and matters had reached their climax at the accession of Queen Victoria. The way in which the West Indian colonies had finally to accept a condition of tutelage opens our period with the realisation by British public opinion of the divergence between the colonies that were capable of self-government and those that must remain dependent.

CHAPTER III

THE HUMANITARIANS AND THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY

THE colonial question that was undoubtedly claiming the largest share of public attention in Great Britain in 1837 was that of slavery and the provisions of the Emancipation Act of four years before. In the discussions and agitation concerning these questions there are to be found so many of the roots of subsequent happenings that we must go back a little to examine them. Only thus can we understand something of the genesis of the modern attitude of British public opinion to our relations with primitive peoples.

For more than a generation there had been an active party of negrophiles at work in Great Britain to abolish the evils of the slave trade and of slavery and they were unremitting in their interest in the slave-owning colonies in the West Indies and in criticism of abuses in government which seemed to them inseparable from the evil social and economic system on which they waged relentless war. Under the lead of William Wilberforce until his retirement in 1823 the philanthropists were closely associated with the foundation of the great missionary societies which were the offspring of the Evangelical Revival. They carried their appeals for support into every home in Great Britain, preaching the brotherhood of man and the duty of carrying the gospel to men of every race and colour. Their crusade went on side by side with the campaigns of the abolitionists to rouse public opinion for the suppression of the slave trade, and this alliance of religious and philanthropic zeal made the influence of its leaders to be regarded with respect by Parliament and the Colonial Office alike. The old mercantile empire had never seen any philanthropic influence of the kind, but in the formative years of the new colonial policy there can be no doubt that the activities of Wilberforce and his followers were a very potent factor.

Some of the most active members of the anti-slavery party, like Joseph Sturge and the Gurneys, were Quakers, but the majority were Evangelicals belonging to the group usually called

“the Clapham Sect.” Many of them lived in what was then the fashionable suburb of Clapham and attended the ministrations of the Rev. Henry Venn at the Parish Church. James Stephen was one of the body, and Zachary Macaulay and Henry Thornton, the promoters of the Sierra Leone Company, were associated with them until their deaths. The inner ring of the party was bound together by inter-marriage and close friendship, and between them its members had access to every avenue of influence in English life. Wilberforce was their leader and inspirer, and though his special followers in the House of Commons were frequently called “the Saints,” he was not closely identified with only one particular religious group but played an active part in all the great movements of the time, like the Religious Tract Society, the British and Foreign Bible Society in which Churchmen and Nonconformists met in equality on the same platform, and the powerful Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.) which was beginning to play such an important part among the primitive peoples of the Empire.

These societies arranged annual meetings in May each year when their committees or directors gave an account to the general body of members or subscribers of what they had done and so familiarised the public throughout the country with what was going on in the outer empire. These “May meetings” were usually held in a particular public hall known as Exeter Hall in the Strand in London, and the influence exerted thence in one direction in the religious and philanthropic sphere was spoken of as the “Exeter Hall” influence. The importance of it lay in the fact that through parochial and denominational channels the leaders could get at the most responsible class of voters in the country and so they could help to sway the results in doubtful Parliamentary elections. Their recruits were drawn impartially from both Whig and Tory parties, and so their influence was not at the disposal of either, but it was felt by individual members in their own constituencies. The height of the power of “Exeter Hall” was reached during the ’thirties, when it undoubtedly swayed the direction of colonial policy. After that period it declined, but even as late as the ’eighties it was still a force to be reckoned with in colonial government through its principal organ the Aborigines’ Protection Society. However, its work had by

then been done. The British public had been educated to realise its duties to its native fellow subjects throughout the Empire and to recognise their rights to order, justice and freedom from exploitation in a way that had never been possible before Wilberforce and his fellows did their work. Although the term was not commonly employed before the 'forties, we may group all those associated with views of this kind, especially in relation to the dependent empire, under the general name of "Humanitarians" from the insistence they laid upon the brotherhood of our common humanity. After the success of Wilberforce's agitation for the abolition of the slave trade and the passage of the Abolition Act in 1807, the anti-slavery advocates did not dissolve themselves but turned their societies to pressing upon the Government measures for the suppression of the slave trade carried on by foreign nations, to watching the actions of the navy entrusted with the task of policing the seas against slavers, and lastly of promoting civilisation among the negroes who had been the victims of the slave traders. But the African Institution that they founded did little to further this last of its purposes, and it met with a depressing lack of success in persuading foreign powers to follow the British example of abolition. By 1823 the number of slaves carried every year across the Atlantic was far greater than it had ever been before 1807, and the abolitionists were convinced that so long as slavery was permitted to exist all the old horrors were incapable of suppression.

In 1823 Wilberforce and his supporters came to the momentous decision to move for the complete abolition of slavery, and they resolved never to rest until every slave in the British Empire was free. Lord Mansfield's great judgment, fifty years before, had made every slave touching British soil a free man, and the abolitionists were determined to make this as true in the colonies as it was in the United Kingdom. Under the presidency of the King's brother, the Duke of Sussex, a new Anti-Slavery Society was founded with a committee of leading men from both sides in politics. Wilberforce was rapidly failing in health and felt himself incapable of the labours of leadership in a new campaign; he cast his mantle on the shoulders of a younger man, Thomas Fowell Buxton, a convinced Evangelical, with a Quaker mother and a Quaker wife and a sister-in-law, Elizabeth Fry, who was the most

•respected woman philanthropist of her day. By his surroundings therefore he was eminently fitted to take up the leadership of the humanitarians in a campaign that since it involved an attack upon property and the whole social structure of the plantation colonies could not fail to be more arduous than Wilberforce's fight for the abolition of the trade had been. Buxton had not the unique position and influence in the House of Commons of his predecessor, but he was a respected back-bench member who was known to have none of those personal interests to serve that smirched the still-powerful West Indian interest.

The first motion for emancipation was moved by Buxton in 1823, and thenceforward the fight was carried on without cessation. If success could not be instantly won, at least the planters could be forced to ameliorate the condition of their slaves and so remove some of the worst scandals. A constant stream of evidence concerning those scandals poured into the public press from West Indian correspondents, and the humanitarians, who were skilled propagandists, saw that it was so directed as to produce the greatest effect on English public opinion. It was another agency to educate the average Englishman in the management of a colonial empire and could not fail to leave its trace. By repeated motions in Parliament Lord Bathurst and the Government were moved to carry out supervising measures in each of the plantation colonies, and by the appointment of officials known as Protectors of Slaves to curb the worst abuses and secure accurate information as to the numbers of slaves in each colony and the conditions in which they were held. Unremitting pressure had to be brought to bear on the colonial legislatures to compel them to pass the necessary measures for the appointment of these officials and to provide funds for their payment, and bitter cries were raised by the planters about the tyranny of the Colonial Office and its disregard of colonial constitutional liberties. In the tiresome wrangles that ensued the legal advice of James Stephen was invaluable, and he had his first intimate contact with the difficulties of colonial government in solving some of the legal problems presented to him from the Crown colonies, thus contributing to form his policy for later years.

By their own unaided efforts Buxton and the humanitarians would have been less powerful than in the alliance they secured

with the East Indian interests. For a century the West Indian colonies had been the spoiled children of the old empire, and now that their sole industry, the sugar trade, had fallen upon evil times, they were loud in their demands upon Parliament for protection. They asked for restrictive duties upon all but their own sugar and bounties on timber and foodstuffs from the northern colonies with which they could supply their slaves. Ever since 1813 sugar from the British East Indies had been penalised in the British market in favour of West Indian sugar by the imposition of an extra duty of 10s. per cwt., and now the members representing East Indian interests complained against this favouring of one empire industry against another and attacked the contention of the West Indians in every way possible. Many of that interest held their seats in the rotten boroughs of the unreformed House of Commons and their opponents were none too scrupulous in using this fact to add to their unpopularity. It was an unworthy weapon of fierce political warfare, but it was by no means the last occasion on which humanitarians claimed all righteousness for themselves and loaded their opponents with accusations of cruelty, corruption and greed.

The ameliorating measures which the administrators of the colonies did their best to carry out for eight years proved incapable of doing more than check the worst abuses. The colonists bombarded Parliament with petitions against them as infringements of their legislative independence while the humanitarians pooh-poohed them as useless palliatives. The affairs of Demerara furnished them with some of the most lurid material for their propaganda, for Sir Benjamin D'Urban, the Governor, while he was wrestling with the difficulties of an impossible constitution inherited from the Dutch had to face dogged obstinacy and libellous abuse for his measures to amend the savage slave laws of the Netherlands régime. Such necessary measures of humanity as to permit the marriage of negroes, to prohibit the flogging of women and to allow the preaching of Christianity to slaves were attacked by the colonists as evidence of D'Urban's tyrannical methods which were bound to lead to the massacre of the whites in a servile insurrection. Similar complaints came from almost every other slave-owning colony, and their abundance and often obvious exaggeration made the English public sceptical of them all and ready to go forward unflinchingly to the critical step.

Responsible leaders in the populous manufacturing towns that were clamouring for parliamentary representation were generally friendly to humanitarian ideas and at the same time advocates of the free trade policy of the removal of commercial restrictions and duties that artificially increased the price of food to their workmen. During Huskisson's short tenure of the Colonial Secretaryship (1827-8) he had done his best to push forward ameliorative measures through the tangled obstructiveness of the colonial legislatures, but he realised that such measures could do but little, and that his ideal of fiscal equality between different parts of the Empire could only be reached by grappling firmly with "the fearful and delicate question of negro slavery," to quote his own words.

At the general election of 1830 the Whig party which was pledged to Parliamentary Reform won a large majority and Earl Grey, who became Prime Minister, began the great struggle in Parliament and the country that was to fill the next two years. But even while they were in the thick of that fight ministers were determined to grapple with the slavery question effectively. They would no longer be put off by the endless procrastination and subterfuges of the colonial legislatures, and they were resolved to coerce or bribe the slave-owning colonies to adopt measures to carry out effectively the humane measures that successive British Cabinets had been striving to push forward ever since 1823. In February 1830 four Orders-in-Council for the regulation of slavery in Trinidad, St. Lucia, Demerara and Barbice, were consolidated into a single code. The Government did not commit themselves to immediate emancipation, but, in April 1831, they announced that the British duties on the produce of slave-owning colonies would be so adjusted as to give financial advantage to those who adopted the new code. Lord Howick, the new Under-Secretary for the Colonies, stated the intention of the Ministry to revise the code so as to restrict the hours of labour during which the slaves were compelled to work and to secure for them a few simple rights. The official Protector of Slaves in each colony was given the power of inspecting the plantations to see that these humane regulations were obeyed. The revised Order-in-Council was circulated to the Colonial Governors in November 1831, with momentous effect.

Meanwhile, in England the most determined abolitionists, under the leadership of a Quaker, Joseph Sturge of Birmingham, resolved to force the hands of the Anti-Slavery Society and to push forward emancipation by a rousing public agitation such as the more conservative members of the Society were unwilling to undertake. Sturge and his friends founded an independent Agency Committee which employed paid agents to lecture and organise agitation throughout Great Britain in favour of immediate emancipation, and so great was their influence in the populous manufacturing centres of Birmingham and the Midlands that they aroused immense popular audiences to a dangerous pitch of enthusiasm. Never before had colonial affairs been a subject of widespread public debate among all classes, and though the agitation of the abolitionists was overshadowed by the demand for the Reform Bill, the two movements had the common cry of "Liberty," which made each of them a frequent subject of mention at the meetings of the other.

The members of the West Indian interest with incredible stupidity promoted the identification of the two causes by denouncing attacks upon rotten boroughs and upon the institution of slavery in the same breath as twin outrages against the sacred rights of property. This was utterly fatal to their cause, for it made the average, fair-minded citizen determine that if he won victory and a vote for himself, he would not forget the poor, oppressed slave. The planters in the colonies were just as blind, for instead of doing what they could for amelioration, they obstructed even the most moderate measures recommended by the Government and followed the lead of the most hot-headed advocates of resistance. Those who wrote for the West Indian press and scribbled pro-slavery pamphlets, went even further and in many cases proclaimed their intention of carrying the sugar colonies out of the Empire and delivering them over to the United States where the sacred rights of property in slaves were still intact.

The colonists attributed a large part of the rapidly increasing unrest among the excitable negroes to the agitation of the Baptist and Wesleyan ministers who had been sent out to the plantations on evangelistic missions by their societies in England and the United States. The ferment produced by their revival meetings

•and often frenzied exhortations added greatly to the difficulties of the Governors in steering their way through the diverse troubles that were submerging the West Indian communities. When early in 1832 the news of the Consolidated Order-in-Council with its new ameliorative slave-code reached the colonies, it was greeted with execration by the planters and the legislatures they elected. They protested that the Order was a tyrannical infringement of their ancient constitutional rights, and in Jamaica the most violent agitators among the whites set to work to organise Committees of Correspondence after the pattern of the American Revolution to promote secession to the United States. The free people of colour, who were enthusiastically loyal to the Empire, were roused to action against the secessionists and they were joined by some of the best elements among the whites, so that the colony was split from top to bottom.

The news of the Order-in-Council was entirely misinterpreted by the negroes and they believed that the day of emancipation had arrived but their freedom was being treacherously withheld from them by their masters. In some of the parishes of the island the planters deprived their slaves of their customary Christmas holiday, and this ill-judged severity gave the signal for the outbreak of the first servile revolt that Jamaica had suffered for seventy years.

More than fifty thousand slaves broke loose, much damage was done to the plantations and many houses and sugar mills in the interior of the island were burned. But not many white people were killed, and the troubles were rather exaggerated and destructive riots than an organised rebellion. The scanty British troops in the island soon restored order in the parts where they were used and they did so with little harshness, but the Jamaica militia completely lost their heads and behaved with great and indiscriminate brutality. Martial law was proclaimed and hundreds of the revolting negroes were executed, while in many places the militia attacked the dissenting chapels of the missionaries and razed them to the ground, proclaiming that those "preaching shops" had been the centres where the rebellion had been prepared.

The news of the outbreak and of the severity of the measures taken in revenge created a tremendous impression upon the anti-slavery enthusiasts and their supporters among the missionary

societies. It arrived at the height of the last stages of the struggle for Parliamentary Reform. The unreformed Parliament was still sitting and the two Houses received the news differently. The House of Lords took it as evidence that strong measures must immediately be applied, but in the Whig House of Commons West Indian influence was failing, and Buxton was able to secure much support for his plan for immediate emancipation as the only reply to the blustering disloyalty of large sections in Jamaica and other of the colonies. But he had still to wait. In June 1832 the Reform Bill was passed at last despite the opposition of the Lords, and when the new House of Commons met in February 1833 the solid phalanx of the West Indian interest had disappeared. But Buxton and the abolitionists were dismayed to find no mention of emancipation in the King's Speech that opened the session. Their friend, Lord Howick, had left the Under-Secretaryship, and Lord Stanley, the new Secretary of State for the Colonies, had assumed office with the declared intention of curbing the immense influence that Stephen, as Permanent Under-Secretary, was beginning to acquire in the government of the outer empire, in a way which Stanley thought entirely unconstitutional. Goderich had implicitly trusted "Mr. Over-Secretary Stephen," as his critics called him, and the Secretary of State took from him the cue for much of his policy, naturally with a strong anti-slavery bias. It was not without significance that the official at the head of the Colonial Office was the nephew of Wilberforce and the son of the bitterest and best informed anti-slavery pamphleteer, and the champions of the slave-owners did not fail to point the moral.

Stanley would not accept Goderich's plan for immediate emancipation with moderate compensation to the slave-owners, but strove to find a compromise by which there should be an intermediate stage of indentured labour or apprenticeship for twelve years, the negroes being obliged to give three-quarters of their time to work for their masters in return for food and clothing.

Lord Howick led the attack in the Commons on Stanley's scheme and especially on the proposal for low-paid indentured labour; he pointed to the experience of New South Wales as showing that the difference of wage rates between free and apprenticed labourers was bound to fail. But it was the speech of the solitary spokesman of the West Indian interest, Sir Richard

- Vyvyan, that damaged their cause most. He strove to intimidate the House by threats that the colonists would appeal for foreign assistance and flatly denied the right of Parliament to legislate on the internal affairs of the colonies especially now that the destruction of rotten boroughs had deprived them even of indirect representation in the House of Commons. In effect he thus demanded the right of Jamaica and other colonies to interfere in British affairs while refusing any intermeddling with their own. This maladroitness showed that the slave-owners had learned nothing, and it roused the newly-elected Liberals to fury. But at the end of his speech Vyvyan admitted the principle of emancipation, and Stanley saw in this a way out. He utterly refused to listen to Vyvyan's extraordinary constitutional claims, for, although he did not say it, he believed, like every Englishman of his generation, that the legislative competence of Parliament throughout the Empire was a fundamental doctrine.

Stephen was ordered to prepare a new bill for emancipation including the apprenticeship scheme but reducing the term from twelve years to seven. In place of the loan of fifteen millions, by private negotiations with the West Indian merchants who held an immense amount of unpaid mortgages incurred by the embarrassed planters, it was arranged that the British Government should make a free gift of twenty millions. This was the smallest sum on which the financial houses in London would consent to continue the financing of the West Indian trade and the plantations, and their answer was decisive. After superhuman exertions Stephen succeeded in drafting the bill in the incredibly short space of time of two days. It was introduced into the House of Commons at the beginning of July 1833 and by the end of August it had passed into law. Buxton and his friends, who detested the apprenticeship provisions, had nevertheless been unable to secure more than a few amendments, and they had to acquiesce in the Government measure as the best they could get.

The fact was that Sturge and his followers had gone too far with their agitation, and had aroused the fears of the more responsible among the newly enfranchised voters that the organised propaganda of the Radicals might be a step on the road to revolution. The compromise was accepted as fair by the mass of moderate opinion, but the lasting result of the agitation was not to be found

there. It lay in the fact that ordinary Englishmen had been convinced that they had duties towards their black fellow-subjects in the colonies as men and younger brothers, and thus an element had been infused into British thought concerning the new empire that had been entirely absent in the old. The voice of national conscience that was thus aroused has never since been stilled.

The slave-owners had none but themselves to blame for the way in which their ten years of disingenuous procrastination had been brought to an end. It was provided that no compensation could be paid in any colony until its legislature had passed the promised measures regarding emancipation and they had been approved by Order-in-Council. The distribution was to be undertaken by specially appointed Slave Compensation Commissioners appointed and paid from England, and special magistrates were also sent out to watch over the working of the apprenticeship system. The old slave colonies had, in fact, been definitely shown how utterly dependent they were upon Great Britain, and that a new era had begun in which they would no longer be the pampered but disobedient children of high Protection. We shall see in our next chapters how the colonies of settlement and freedom were in the same period passing through an even more momentous change, but in a diametrically opposite direction. However, before we turn away from the plantation colonies, we must note the immediate sequel of the legal abolition of the state of slavery, both in Great Britain and oversea.

It was in truth only the legality of slavery that had been abolished, for in no sense could it be said that the slaves had been made free men. They were, under the apprenticeship system, still for a large part of their time the bond servants of their old masters, and they could legally be pursued and brought back to the plantations if they escaped. The old machinery for the amelioration of the lot of the negroes that had been established in 1823 was retained, but it was left to be managed by the colonial legislatures, and, needless to say, much dissatisfaction remained among the abolitionists, who saw the victory they had won at such a cost to the British taxpayer rendered nugatory by the obstructiveness of the planters. This dissatisfaction had a large share in keeping alive the distrust of the British public in employers of black labour, and it had a

· large share, too, in moulding public opinion on colonial affairs for years to come.

It is not fair, however, to group all the colonies together in discussing their proceedings after the passing of the Act. Two of them, the Bermudas and Antigua, decided by Acts of their legislatures to make their negroes entirely free and thus to convert at once their economic system to one based upon wages. In both cases the decision succeeded and the emancipation was completed quietly. Antigua had been the scene of more missionary work than any other colony, and its negroes were more advanced, so that this may have contributed to make immediate emancipation a success, as it undoubtedly was, for the island exported more sugar than ever before and was quiet and prosperous. In the Crown colonies (Trinidad, St. Lucia, etc.) the apprenticeship system was introduced by Governor's order, but in the old colonies which had representative government, the legislatures only passed the Acts with grudging reluctance in order to get their share of the compensation fund. Jamaica, the most important, and as usual the most refractory, was the scene of the most trouble. The new Secretary of State for the Colonies in Lord Melbourne's Ministry, Lord Glenelg, had been a strong abolitionist and supporter of missions and he backed Lord Sligo, the Governor of Jamaica, in his disputes with the Assembly over their obstructiveness to ameliorative measures. Unfortunately, however, in 1836 Sligo supported the Legislative Council in a dispute with the Assembly in a way that the Lower House claimed to be a breach of their constitutional privileges. They refused in consequence to proceed with business and a complete deadlock ensued. The Home Government had to secure the passage of an Act of Parliament to ensure the temporary carrying-on of the apprenticeship system in Jamaica, and since in a narrow technical sense Lord Sligo had made a breach of precedent, Glenelg had to recall him and appoint a new Governor, Sir Lionel Smyth.

Smyth, in his previous Governorship of Barbados, had already had some trouble with the Legislature over finance, and it had only been ended by the British Treasury assuming the payment of his salary as an imperial charge. He came to Jamaica, therefore, with strong views upon the strike on which its Assembly had embarked. The trouble came to a head in 1838 when Parliament

in default of the passage of a colonial measure for the reform of the undeniable abuses in the Jamaica prisons passed the West India Prisons Act by which the Crown was empowered to close unfit prisons without the consent of the colonial legislatures. The Jamaica Assembly denounced the Act as a tyrannical attack upon their legislative independence, and in a series of outrageous resolutions refused to pass any further laws or to assist in removing the anomalies that had been revealed in the working of the apprenticeship system. It was a complete legislative strike.

Glenelg and the rest of Lord Melbourne's Cabinet were convinced that the time had come when a drastic step was essential and they introduced into the House of Commons a bill suspending the Jamaica legislature for five years. Some of their supporters wished to go further and abolish all the representative governments in the West Indies, but even the more lenient compromise they proposed was severely attacked by Sir Robert Peel, the leader of the Tory Opposition, as a proposal to replace by a despotic and arbitrary power the liberal system of popular election that had prevailed for a hundred and fifty years. The bill only passed the Commons by a very small majority, and before it was considered by the Lords, Peel became Prime Minister, but, as will be remembered, he retired almost immediately over the Bed-Chamber Question, and Melbourne returned to office. An Act was passed with merely a small addition to the Governor's powers, and Sir Lionel Smyth retired, for it was impossible for him to carry on with a legislature so bitterly opposed to him. Sir Charles Metcalfe, his successor, by the exercise of great tact managed to get the machine of government to work again, but the conflict was only postponed and, as we shall note in a subsequent chapter, it broke out again with even more virulence eight years later, in 1846.

The dispute is of far more importance in the development of the Empire than it has sometimes been granted. It was immediately concurrent with the constitutional conflicts in Canada which we shall consider in our next chapter, and it undoubtedly played a part in moulding opinion on colonial policy. It marks the beginning of a differential treatment between the new colonies of settlement and the old plantation colonies with their representative institutions and precedents inherited from the old empire, and so it should be remembered in connection with the beginnings of

dominion status. The West Indian legislatures were characterised in a memorandum prepared for the Cabinet by the permanent officials as merely the instruments of a white oligarchy which could neither be converted to the needs of a new era of freedom nor instructed. They were merely the result and representatives of slavery and wholly incompetent for the task of educating and improving a people newly born into freedom.

The constitutional conflict in Jamaica furnished the opportunity for which the zealous abolitionists of the Agency Committee were waiting. They had never acquiesced in the apprenticeship system established by the Emancipation Act, and now they renewed their public agitation in Great Britain for its destruction. Resolutions were sent to the Government from immense public meetings organised by Sturge and his friends, and when the Cabinet presented to Parliament a merely amending measure, it was greeted with a storm of indignant protest. William Ewart Gladstone, the son of an old slave-owner, was the principal defender of the planter's case, but his eloquence was of no avail, and at last after much hesitation Lord Glenelg and the Cabinet gave way. It was decided to abolish the apprenticeship system at once, and in August 1838 the measure came into effect throughout the colonies. Thus the long fight that Wilberforce had begun in 1787, fifty years before, had won at last and the last vestiges of plantation slavery in the British Empire were wiped from the statute book.

CHAPTER IV

THE COLONIAL REFORMERS AND THE RISING TIDE OF EMIGRATION

DOWN to 1830 most of the attention of those who were interested in colonial affairs was still directed, as it had been in the old mercantile empire, towards the material results of colonisation and to the plantations as supplying a necessary complement to the national wealth by producing tropical commodities that could not be raised in England. Even the colonies in British North America were thought of mainly as the source of naval stores, timber, pitch, tar and hemp, for which Great Britain would otherwise be dependent on the countries of Northern Europe, and pot and pearl-ash which were needed for the manufacture of soap. The new colonies of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land in the Southern hemisphere were still thought of only as places for the transportation of convicts, though they were already beginning to be an important source of wool. The colony at the Cape of Good Hope was considered mainly for its strategical importance as a half-way house on the route to India, although it was beginning to be realised that new problems were arising there in connection with the government of primitive African peoples.

By 1830, however, a new flood of ideas concerning colonisation was rapidly rising and men were coming to look towards the vacant spaces of the outer empire as providing opportunities for the relief of the distressed masses who were suffering bitter hardships in the years of slump that followed the great wars. The idea of emigration as a means of alleviating poverty and an outlet for surplus population had been propounded by Richard Hakluyt and the colonising theorists of Elizabeth's reign two hundred and fifty years before, but they had passed into oblivion, and from the time of the Restoration onwards the opposite policy had been in the ascendant. The emigration of Englishmen to the colonies was discouraged as depriving the country of the labour of its citizens and hampering the growth of population and national wealth.

From 1660 to 1815 the outflow of emigration from England to the colonies was a mere trickle. It was unorganised and unassisted and the English emigrants who did cross the Atlantic, save in the case of a few transported convicts, went out on their own initiative and usually in unorganised fashion at their own expense. It is true that the growth of population in the continental colonies of the old empire was very rapid, but it derived little from English sources. It sprang in part from a rapid rate of natural increase and in part from the influx of immigrants from Western Europe, mainly Germans and Swiss, and distressed persons from Scotland and Northern Ireland who had been driven from their homes after the troubles of the early eighteenth century. It was this that made the American population at the time of the Revolution so different from the colonists of practically pure English stock who had first built up the communities on the Atlantic seaboard in the period of the Great Emigration, 1629-42.

The outrush from the old country first clearly manifested itself in the stream across the Atlantic to British North America, but it was unorganised and without any systematic assistance from the Government. Societies that were founded to relieve the prevailing distress in the Highlands and in Western Scotland took up the idea of emigration as part of their schemes, and they favoured Upper Canada as the region to which they should direct their settlers. The new colonies in the Maritime Provinces and Upper Canada were peopled after 1783 mainly by the influx of American Loyalists and those who followed them in the next twenty years. There were a few Germans and some Scottish Highlanders, while French Canadians moved down from Quebec to take up lands in the newly settled areas, but there was no rush from England, and by 1815 the population of Upper Canada, then with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick the only goal of British emigrants, did not amount to more than 80,000, the large majority of American stock. Many of the emigrants who found their way across the Atlantic in the years immediately after the Peace, drifted over the border into the United States, and this was particularly the case with the Irishmen who were sent across the Atlantic to Quebec, which was the usual landing port. Large numbers went to do the work of labourers in New York and other cities that were being built up at an amazing rate in the United States, and this left the popula-

tion of Upper Canada without any strong Irish tinge ; but the Scotsmen largely remained on British territory and gave to Canada much of the energy and virile qualities which are inherent in its people. Between 1815 and 1824 the population of Upper Canada grew from 80,000 to 150,000 and in the next six years it increased by a further 65,000 without any systematic direction and merely as the result of a spontaneous popular movement.

The first scheme for Government-assisted emigration dates from 1819-20 and resulted in the transfer of some 1200 people of the working and middle classes to the Albany Settlement on the eastern frontier of Cape Colony. The main aim of the Government in aiding that scheme was not the relief of distress, but the establishment of a buffer colony along the frontier as a defence against the inroads of the Kaffir tribes who were menacing Cape Colony. The immediate results were very unfortunate, both for the settlers themselves who suffered great distress for a time until they were dispersed throughout the older settled parts of Cape Colony and for the British Treasury which was called upon to find much more money than had originally been set aside for the scheme. But its organisation and the propaganda its promoters set on foot to attract recruits familiarised the English public with the ideas of organised emigration schemes on a large scale, and thus prepared the way for later projects.

Soon after the Peace of 1815 had brought an end to the abnormal conditions of the war years, serious attention was directed to the problems of the English Poor Law System which had remained almost unaltered since the days of Elizabeth. During the 'twenties the idea was actively promoted that the best solution of the problem of the surplus pauper population would be to send out the paupers, either individually or in families, to the colonies at the expense of the Poor Law Guardians or possibly with assistance from the Treasury. The chief advocate of this plan was Robert Wilmot Horton, a leading member of the Tory party and Under-Secretary for the Colonies. Horton's schemes did not specially favour any particular colony as the place to which the poor law emigrants should be sent, but the attention of other projectors was beginning to turn to the vacant lands under the British flag in the Southern hemisphere, and from about 1828 onwards for the next thirty years the leading place in all emigration schemes was taken

by Australia. Migration to British North America went on steadily, as before, but it aroused none of the controversy that raged around the lands in the south and was overshadowed by the political troubles which, as we shall note in the next chapter, filled the minds of the Canadians at the time.

The island continent of New Holland, as Australia was still called, was generally regarded as wholly British, but its only settlements were the convict establishments of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land in the south-east. Since the beginning of the century there had been a gradual influx of free settlers, mostly farmers and shepherds who were attracted by the prosperity of the rising wool industry. But the population still consisted largely of officials and convicts and the "emancipists" who had won their freedom after working out their sentences. The whole of the rest of the Australian coastline was untouched, though there was a project on foot to establish a settlement in North Australia to aid the East India Company's trade with China. However, that project came to nothing, and it was in the south-west of the continent that a new Australian settlement was started as a direct result of the growing interest in systematic emigration and colonisation. The Swan River Settlement in the region now known as Western Australia was first formally occupied in 1826 in order to forestall its occupation by the French, who were then beginning to think of acquiring new colonies. Captain James Stirling, who was awaiting in the south-west the end of the rainy season when he might begin the projected settlement in Northern Australia, sent home word of the surveys the French had been making, and recommended the Swan River territory as being fertile, with a temperate climate and particularly suitable for British colonisation.

The time was ripe for the acceptance of such a scheme; Australian colonisation was in the air and two great land companies, the Australian Agricultural Company and the Van Diemen's Land Company, had just been established to undertake wool-growing on a large scale with skilled shepherds sent out at the Company's expense. Stirling's reports on the Swan River district and his colonising suggestions were received coldly by the Colonial Office who were smarting under their recent failure in South Africa and believed that any new scheme must mean additional expense to

the Treasury. But when a syndicate headed by Thomas Peel and Sir Francis Vincent came forward with the offer to send out 10,000 free settlers within four years at their own charge, provided the Government would make a large grant of land and would establish a small number of officials to govern the new colony, Lord Goderich decided to accept the offer.

Captain Fremantle took formal possession on the banks of the Swan River of all the parts of New Holland not included in the territory of New South Wales, and an active propaganda was commenced by the syndicate to attract recruits by the promise of land grants of forty acres for £3. There was a rush of investors at this tempting rate, and immense tracts of unsurveyed land were granted away to the members of the syndicate and a few others. Many regulations were drawn up to ensure the working of the granted lands, but they bore little relation to the actual conditions and were of no effect. The first party of settlers arrived in the middle of 1829 and under the energetic Governorship of James Stirling they began to organise the colony's government. Though it was in reality but the adventure of certain speculative capitalists, the Colonial Office had assumed the responsibility of providing for and paying the necessary officials, and an Act of Parliament was obtained to authorise it. Unfortunately, however, the settlers who were sent out had no experience of dealing with conditions in a virgin country and one that was especially difficult owing to the heavy timber which must be cleared before the soil could be tilled. Their stores were inadequate and unsuitable, and the capital of the syndicate was exhausted before the preliminary difficulties were surmounted. Thus Britain's first free colony in Australia had to struggle on amidst grievous hardships, and though the officials sent out by the Government were capable and energetic, Thomas Peel and others of the promoters proved unbusinesslike and incompetent. In 1831 and 1832 the colonists were actually threatened with famine, and Stirling had to leave for England to seek substantial Government help. The story of the troubles gave the colony a bad name among intending emigrants, and ten years after its foundation it only had 2,500 inhabitants. But Western Australia had by that time become firmly established and self-supporting, though only on a small scale. There had clearly been mistakes in the original plans and many who had begun to think seriously of

colonisation as a remedy for national ills, saw those mistakes in the system of lavish land grants that had been adopted and proclaimed them with great vigour to the public.

While the Swan River experiment was being prepared in 1828, there lay in Newgate Gaol under sentence of imprisonment for abduction the man who more than all others for the next twenty-five years was to be the chief promoter of English colonisation. Edward Gibbon Wakefield was the son of Edward Wakefield, a friend and follower of Jeremy Bentham, the apostle of the utilitarians, and from his early years he had been accustomed to hear the discussion of ideas concerning the planning of the development of human society. His family connections with the Quakers and his father's friends gave him access to the most active and progressive thinkers of the time, and this was of considerable importance in promoting the influence of his schemes. He was a man of great natural ability and an extraordinary persuasiveness, but he was unscrupulous and self-willed, and he could not carry out in practical detail the ideas he promoted with so much fervour. The cruel abduction for which he was convicted left a stigma upon his name so that he could never receive public recognition or employment, and this placed him in a permanent attitude of hostility to the Colonial Office and the constituted authorities. With his natural power of persuasion and of invention he was able to convince many that his projects were thwarted of the rapid success they deserved only by the obstinacy and inefficiency of Colonial Office clerks and the politicians they advised. In most cases such opinions, held by a single individual, would be of little historical importance, but in this case such was Wakefield's vigour and so receptive of his ideas were certain persons in influential positions in Parliament that undoubtedly they played a part of first-rate importance in moulding the new colonies of settlement.

While Wakefield was under sentence in Newgate he began to think of "Botany Bay" and New South Wales as a possible future home after his release and he talked with convicts who had returned thence and with others who were awaiting transportation. This filled his mind with theories of colonisation and he set himself to compose a pamphlet to propound those theories. It took the form of a fictitious *Letter from Sydney*, ostensibly written by a colonist on the spot, but composed with such graphic power as

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to persuade those who read it of its genuineness. It was published anonymously in 1829, while Wakefield was still working out his three years' sentence, and it excited extraordinary attention.

The complete theory of the Wakefield System, for which he is remembered, was not worked out when he first began to concern himself with colonisation, and he appeared only as an opponent of the schemes for pauper emigration promoted by Wilmot Horton. His first associate was Robert Gouger, under whose editorship the *Letter from Sydney* appeared. Gouger had long been interested in emigration schemes and had founded an Emigration Society to advise intending emigrants which secured influential backing. As has already been said, colonising ideas were in the air; statesmen and public alike were seeking relief from economic depression in emigration but lacked consistent ideas and a concrete policy that would not impose an intolerable burden upon the tax-payer. Wakefield pointed with extraordinary incisiveness and vigour to the causes of failure as, first, the lack of all systematic effort at colonisation on a large scale and second, the defects of the haphazard system of land grants. These defects might be remedied by using Australian land in the hands of the Crown as capital, selling it in small quantities at a "sufficient" price and employing the proceeds as a fund for promoting immigration. Thus, in his view, the dearth of labour might be supplied, and a population of workers secured who would furnish their labour to the upper classes in Australia for wages in order to earn sufficient to purchase small holdings for themselves. His ideal was to build up colonies in the new lands which should be microcosms of English society with its clearly marked upper, middle and lower classes, each performing its special duty to the state.

These clear-cut ideas were extraordinarily attractive to the minds of the doctrinaire thinkers who were then in the ascendant, and Wakefield succeeded in convincing many of the new Whig leaders that he had found the solution for many of their difficulties in national planning. Lord Howick took up the idea enthusiastically, and when Wakefield after his release joined Gouger in founding the National Colonisation Society in 1830, he was able to secure the adhesion of many active young men of influence and progressive views. He made colonial reform the sudden fashion, and when the Society launched its campaign to advocate "a

general system of colonisation, founded on the main principles of selection, concentration and the sale of waste land for the purposes of emigration," it secured great support among those whose minds had already been turned to colonial affairs by the agitation of the humanitarians which was discussed in our previous chapter. The theory behind Wakefield's plan was in tune with the fashionable thoughts upon the new science of political economy which filled such a large part in the press of the time, and much of Wakefield's historical importance lies in the fact that he appeared just at the opportune moment.

The proper disposal of Australian land was no new problem, for it had been an object of close concern to the Colonial Office ever since the middle years of Lord Bathurst's tenure of the Secretaryship of State. It must be remembered that New South Wales in the eyes of the Government was still, as it had been for thirty years or more, mainly a place for the punishment and reformation of transported convicts. Full control over such a settlement could only be preserved if it were kept closely concentrated round the centre. The only land that might be granted either to time-expired convicts, called "emancipists," or to free immigrants was confined to the nineteen counties which had been fully surveyed and lay round Sydney. But the force of circumstances was rapidly defeating this policy of concentration. The good sheep land within the nineteen counties had all passed into the hands of private owners before 1825, but the demand for wool was steadily growing, and enterprising young men of good family who were coming out from England with some capital behind them were anxious to take up sheep-farming. Beyond the boundaries of the nineteen counties the vast lands of the interior were insistently calling to them, and despite the disapproval of the Government in Sydney there was an unremitting outflow of bold, colonising pioneers of first-class ability up and over the mountains with their flocks to search for pastures in the wide-reaching valleys of the Lachlan and the Murrumbidgee. When they found them, these pioneer pastoralists established themselves on their "sheep runs" or "stations" in a simple fashion, and soon they were sending down to Sydney every season loads of as good wool as could be produced within the nineteen counties. But the pioneers could not get title to the lands on which they settled, and they were

contemptuously called "squatters," like the ne'er-do-weels who filched a bit from an English common on which to erect their shacks.

The Australian squatters were in truth the most enterprising people in the colony and their industry was destined to add to the wealth of the whole community. The old narrowly restricted penal settlement was soon to be overshadowed by their enterprise, and before 1830 New South Wales had violently burst its bounds and overflowed westward, north and southward into the Australian interior. Neither the old leaders of the colony nor the Colonial Office realized the importance of what was happening, for they mistook those who had passed beyond the bounds of authorised settlement and had occupied new lands without legal title for mere land-grabbers who might be dispossessed without compunction. Governor Bourke knew better, and saw that the squatters were to become the most important element in New South Wales. In 1831 he wrote to the Secretary of State urging the necessity of putting the squatters' claims on a proper legal basis, but for five years the Government would not listen. Its attention was focussed on the lands within the nineteen counties and on attempts by juggling with the land laws according to Wakefield's theories to promote free emigration to New South Wales, thus completely reversing the earlier policy of maintaining the colony as a penal settlement. This was natural enough, for the tide of agitation in the colony against transportation was steadily rising and it was foreseen that sooner or later none but free men could be sent to the colony and the supply of subsidised convict labour must cease. The abolition of transportation was not attained till 1840, but before then the old line of cleavage between "free" and "emancipist" in the colony had begun to disappear, and the new division of interest between squatter and agriculturist became evident.

The colonial theorists were able to convince Lord Howick that most of the land difficulties in New South Wales were due to the cheapness of land and labour and to the scattering of the settlers too widely throughout the nineteen counties. In 1831 Goderich as Colonial Secretary sanctioned a code of new regulations, drawn up by Howick, to promote the more effectual improvement and cultivation of a narrower and more concentrated area. The Ripon Regulations (so called after Goderich's later title) provided that

free grants of land were to cease and that it could only be obtained by purchase by auction at an upset price of not less than five shillings per acre. This did away with the cheap land which prevented the application of the Wakefield theory and it was greatly resented in the colony as tending to drive away intending settlers with capital. But on the other question of cheap labour colonists and theorists joined forces and it was on the motion of Sir William Molesworth, one of Wakefield's allies, that the House of Commons in 1837 appointed a select committee under his chairmanship to examine the whole of the system of transportation in the light of the petitions against it from New South Wales. A new division of opinion appeared in the colony between the employers who wanted supplies of cheap convict or ticket-of-leave labour and the new free immigrants who wanted to earn the best wages that they could. This division went parallel with that between the squatter capitalists, and the small farmer, and so we get the alignment on economic matters that has been a persistent factor in Australian politics.

With the complications produced by the convict system it was clear to the colonial theorists that New South Wales could not offer a good field for their experiments, and the colonies in British North America flatly refused to have anything to do with them; South Africa was barred by the Kaffir wars, and Wakefield and his friends therefore turned to the fertile regions on the coast of South Australia which had just been very favourably reported upon by their explorer, Charles Sturt (1838-9). Efforts were made under the lead of Colonel Robert Torrens, M.P., and the public-spirited financier, George Fife Angas, to establish a joint-stock South Australian Company to put into practice the Wakefield principles of land sales and emigration. Their application to the Colonial Office in 1831 was opposed by Goderich and Stephen, who feared that new settlements might be additional sources of expense to the depleted British Treasury. In 1833, however, the petitioners returned to the charge, and Wakefield published a vigorous book, *England and America*, to press further the theories he had set forth in earlier publications. A South Australian Association was founded with Gouger as its Secretary and with purely philanthropic propaganda in place of the earlier joint-stock scheme which had striven to secure support by promises of private profit.

The new ministry at last gave way, and in 1834 Parliament passed an Act to establish the "British Province of South Australia."

The government of the new colony was placed in the hands of a Board of unpaid Commissioners nominated by Torrens and Gouger and since at first they did not ask for Government help, they refused to allow the Colonial Office any say in their proceedings. They very soon quarrelled with Wakefield, and by the time the first colonists were ready to sail in 1836, he had abandoned all connection with the scheme. Its true foster-father was Angas, who managed to attract capital in the City of London to the amount of £320,000, and with the agency of a commercial South Australia company, of which he was chairman, provided the new colony with most of its machinery for material progress. But the division of authority between the Commissioners, the Company and the Crown could not fail to produce evil effects and those who got together the emigrants in England by the employment of paid recruiting agents and sent them out to the colony, were so inexperienced that they made great promises which could not be fulfilled.

The main expedition sailed from London in the summer of 1836 and in December its leader, Sir John Hindmarsh, an ex-naval officer, began the settlement of the Adelaide plains. Many mistakes were made owing to inexperience, but South Australia was fortunate from the beginning in having a very able and devoted set of officials, though their work was obstructed by the division of authority and the attempt to carry out the paper theories of the Commissioners in England caused much trouble. Colonel George Gawler, the Governor nominated by them to succeed Hindmarsh in 1838, found it impossible to carry out the impracticable instructions sent to him, and he had to take advantage of a provision granting him discretionary authority in an emergency. By introducing experienced officials from New South Wales who were familiar with Australian conditions, and by providing stores to save distressed settlers from starving, he was able to carry the colony on through its early struggles, and a stream of pastoralists began to pour in from the older colonies with their flocks to find new pastures.

Within five years after its first settlement South Australia had acquired a substantial population, and there were 15,000 colonists

at work, although too great a proportion of them were collected in the new capital, Adelaide. But the cost had been very high. Gawler had provided essential roads, public buildings and properly organised surveys, but he had had to pay for them by drawing bills against the funds of the Board of Commissioners in England. When they found that the amount of capital expended exceeded by £120,000 the money remaining in their hands, the Commissioners fell into a panic. They refused to recognise that Gawler had incurred the liabilities in accordance with the authority delegated to him and, in order to further their scheme and without any serious attempt to obtain fresh public subscriptions, they repudiated responsibility for the Governor's bills and left them to be dishonoured. Nor would the Government step in to help the Commissioners or their nominee, Gawler, out of their difficulties. The Treasury had to carry the burden of government expenditure in the painfully surviving remnants of the Swan River experiment, and they would not assume further liabilities for the South Australian scheme whose promoters had boasted so loudly that it would be self-supporting. The Colonial Office would not recognise that much of the expense that Governor Gawler had incurred was due to his success in carrying the colony far along the road to self-support and especially to the influx of immigrants many of whom came from the old penal colonies. At that very time, as we shall explain in a moment, the officials were struggling against the demands of the promoters of colonisation in New Zealand and they were determined not to assume responsibility for the default of the South Australian Commissioners.

However, in 1841 the Government and Parliament had to admit that the responsibility for South Australia was really a national affair. Gawler was recalled in disgrace; the Commissioners were displaced; and the Crown took over the administration of the colony according to the normal form. A royal Governor was appointed and sent out to Adelaide to take charge. The Treasury was at last compelled to accept liability for the repudiated bills in order to avoid serious bankruptcies among the English firms who had provided the money, but only upon the condition that most drastic economies were carried out.

The Governor chosen for the difficult task was a young army officer, Captain George Grey, who had just won a great reputation

for initiative and energy in the exploration of Western Australia. For the next thirty years his name was to be more prominent than that of any other official in the Colonial service, but in this, his first essay in government, his self-reliance and strength of will were at least as fully taxed as in any of his later employments. With his characteristic vigour of language Grey cast undeserved scorn on the very solid achievements of his predecessor, and this has caused Gawler's services to be discredited, but it ought not to be forgotten that it was he who first set South Australia on the road to future prosperity and made the colony attractive to emigrants.

Immediately upon his arrival Grey set to work to introduce drastic measures that were designed to drive people out from the newly planned garden capital in Adelaide to raise food for themselves by tilling the land. A serious crisis was at once brought to a head, for the Home Government were determined to teach the settlers economy and to assume no responsibility for the glowing promises of the original promoters of the colony and the emigration agents. So far did they carry this intention that Grey had to undergo the same experience as Gawler and see many of the bills that he had drawn upon London to pay for necessary stores dishonoured and unpaid. It was a stringent time, and execrations were poured upon the Colonial Office and its presiding genius, "Mr. Over-Secretary" Stephen, who were denounced as heartless skin-flints. Naturally Wakefield and his friends made use of this abuse to forward their own new schemes which the Colonial Office was opposing, but Stephen was unmoved. It is only possible to realise something of the complexity of the situation with which he had to deal when we remember that South Australia was only one of many enterprises that were calling for help in troops for police and protection, in skilled administrators and judges, and above all in money that must be wrung out of a harassed Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was at his wits' end to balance the national budget.

By 1845 South Australia had turned the corner and the demands upon the British Treasury had practically ceased. The colony had become self-supporting because it had found salvation in its wheat lands. They produced wheat of first-rate quality that as early as 1842 could provide valuable return cargoes in large bulk to be

loaded into the ships that brought out emigrants and stores. Its sale at good prices on the British market, despite the extra duties that it had to bear against Canadian wheat, provided the colonists with a balance in London to pay for their requirements of manufactured goods, and it was this that made South Australia attractive to agricultural emigrants of good quality in the same way that New South Wales was now attracting them by its wool. Another proof was thus afforded of the truth of the essential principle that successful colonisation is dependent in the first instance not upon paper constitutions and political schemes, but upon the finding of a staple product by which the settlers can pay their way.

Before the discovery of minerals in South Australia between 1841 and 1845, especially silver, lead and copper, promoted a new inrush of emigrants, the population that had stood at 15,000 when Grey succeeded Gawler in 1841, mounted to more than 36,000. In 1850 just before the gold rush made a radical change in the whole Australian situation there were 63,700 people in the colony. It was under these conditions that Grey introduced a modified Wakefield system of land sales in 1842 at a minimum price of 20s. per acre, but this certainly did little to promote the prosperity of the colony, save by adding to the Emigration Fund from which to pay assisted passages for emigrants.

Meanwhile the progress of Western Australia was lamentably slow. In 1840 there were only 2,300 settlers in the colony, and the foundation of a Western Australia Company by Wakefield and his friends to open up new settlements, in which their vaunted system might be applied, did nothing to remedy the distressing state of affairs. Governor John Hutt, who ruled over the colony, was a convinced devotee of the Wakefield theory and gave all the help he could, but the settlement of Australind, as the Company's adventure was called, proved a lamentable fiasco, for it attracted but a few emigrants and the capital of the Company was exhausted before they were fully established. It was under these depressing circumstances that in 1849 the colonists took the desperate step of applying to the Government for a supply of convicts to provide cheap labour for the colony. It was extremely distasteful for the petitioners thus to have to confess to failure and take refuge in the detested transportation system, from which all the other Australian colonies had now freed themselves. But they knew that the pros-

perity of New South Wales rested on a convict foundation, and they clutched at it as a last resort against ruin. Materially, it succeeded, for in the next ten years the derelict settlement of 1849 was turned into a thriving and self-supporting colony.

Transportation to New South Wales ceased in 1840, to general public relief, but in 1846, when it appeared that Van Diemen's Land could not absorb the flood of convicts poured into it, W. E. Gladstone, Colonial Secretary in Peel's Ministry, proposed to rescind the previous decision and re-open New South Wales for transportation. The news of this proposal roused the colony to furious indignation, but Earl Grey (the Lord Howick of earlier years) who had succeeded to the Colonial Secretaryship, accepted his predecessor's proposals and in 1848 took steps to send out new convict ships. Despite the support of W. C. Wentworth, one of the colonies' prominent leaders, determined opposition was organised, but at first Grey would only give way so far as to promise to send the convicts only to the northern part of the colony round Moreton Bay, where new pastoral settlements were being founded, to become the separate colony of Queensland in 1859. The agitation derived extra strength from its alliance with the concurrent movement for self-government, and it was so exceedingly bitter that Grey was compelled to give way, and in 1849 the offending orders were withdrawn, and, as we have remarked, Western Australia was chosen instead as the place of destination of the convicts.

The fact was that between 1840 and 1849 the population of New South Wales had completely changed its character. Other colonies might attract some emigrants, but the main streams still went to the United States, British North America or New South Wales. Most of the emigrants had little or no capital but were small men dependent on their own labour by which in the poverty-stricken towns and countryside of the England of the "hungry forties" they could earn but a scanty subsistence. They sprang from the masses to whom Chartism made its appeal, and though they were filled with determined aspirations for political reform, they were even more resolved not to have their wages cut down by the competition of convict labour. In 1841 there were approximately 27,000 convicts and 102,000 free settlers in New South Wales including the Port Phillip district; in 1851, before the gold rush

of that year, there were nearly 190,000 people in New South Wales besides 77,000 round Port Phillip, which was later to become the colony of Victoria, and all were free. The difference of 138,000 represented the inflow of emigrants on a larger scale than anywhere else in the Empire, save British North America.

The failure of their theories in South Australia and the growth of Canada and New South Wales despite them might have daunted any but Wakefield and his doctrinaire friends, but they could find numberless excuses to explain what had gone wrong, and they were ever ready to start new experiments. While the new theories were at the height of their popularity and it was the fashion for every young progressive to look to Wakefield as a prophet, the independent stream of humanitarianism which we traced in the previous chapter was still flowing in full force and could bring effective pressure to bear on Downing Street because of Lord Glenelg's succession to the Colonial Secretaryship. He was a convinced humanitarian and a devout supporter of the missionary societies, and his tenure of office was the high-water mark of external influence upon colonial government. Where before West Indian planters and commercial magnates had been able to sway the direction of policy, now the idealists were able to push their criticisms of colonial governors and get a hearing for their endless representations. It is in connection with South African affairs that they are usually remembered, but we must leave that side of the story of the 'thirties and 'forties till later. Here we must note first how the rival streams of simultaneous movement came into opposition on the colonising schemes of one particular region, New Zealand, and how the humanitarians strove with colonial reformers for the ear of Downing Street and Parliament.

Thomas Fowell Buxton, who had been the leader in the struggle for emancipation from 1823 to 1833, then carried his interest over from the negro slaves to the aboriginal peoples with whom the British in their new colonial advance were now coming into contact. In the old empire such contact had been fatal, and it had been a common saying in the American colonies that "There is no good Indian but a dead Indian." It was against this type of thought that the humanitarians took their stand, and their deter-

mination to safeguard the rights of the aborigines and prevent their exploitation or extermination has had a profound influence both upon the British Empire and the world. The conflict came to a head over the case of a native people, the Maoris of New Zealand, at the moment when Wakefield and his friends were making their final attempt to carry out their theories in a new colony. Thus New Zealand derives both from the colonial reformers and from the humanitarians and missionaries, and the foundation of the colony and its pacification under Sir George Grey mark the climax of the founding period of the new empire.

In the penal days of the settlement in New South Wales the islands of New Zealand, whose coast had been explored by Captain Cook (1770-1), were only visited by occasional whalers or by escaped convicts and deserters. The first promoter of the Christianisation of their attractive native inhabitants was the Rev. Samuel Marsden, chaplain at Sydney, who between 1814 and 1823 firmly established mission stations in the North Island whence civilising influences gradually spread out to pacify the savage tribal wars that were destroying the whole Maori people. Until the coming of the missionaries, the whole results of the contact of white and native were bad, for the lawless and ungoverned settlements of the whalers and traders on the Bay of Islands were plague spots of contamination. The supporter of Marsden in his first efforts and of the devoted missionary, Henry Williams, who carried them on, was the Church Missionary Society, the special foundation of the Evangelicals to whom Wilberforce, Buxton and the leading humanitarians belonged. Thus, in the middle 'thirties, when New Zealand began to come largely under the public eye, those who took the most active interest in it and were able to present their views to the Government with the greatest weight of evidence, were the humanitarian advocates of native rights. The islands were not a part of the British Empire, although ever since 1817 they had been regarded in some sense as within the sphere of New South Wales, and by Act of Parliament offences committed in New Zealand could be tried in the colony's courts. In 1831 there were rumours that the French were intending to begin colonising, and certain Maori chiefs through the Church Missionary Society petitioned the Government for protection. But all that was done was the appointment of a Resident in

New Zealand by the Governor of New South Wales, though he was unprovided with any force to back him, and in such disorderly surroundings his influence was very slight.

Meanwhile in England New Zealand affairs were attracting public interest and becoming a topic of general discussion. They were mentioned before two Parliamentary Committees that had been appointed to inquire into different aspects of colonial policy upon the motion in the first case of the humanitarians and, in the second, of the colonial reformers. The Aborigines Committee was appointed in 1835 with Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton in the chair to examine the condition of the natives in and near all the British settlements, and the committee on the Disposal of Waste Colonial Lands was set up in 1836 on the direct prompting of Edward Gibbon Wakefield. Buxton's Committee set down certain fundamental principles that should govern the relations between the white man and the native races and we must return to them later, for they lie at the basis of subsequent British policy. Here,¹ however, we need only note one important passage in their report which appeared in 1837, for it led to a direct conflict of ideas with Wakefield and the supporters of his plans for colonising New Zealand. It emphasised the doctrine preached by the humanitarians that land for colonisation ought not to be taken away or even bought from aboriginal tribes except in pursuit of a properly considered national policy. They registered their opinion that "the extent of the vacant lands within the existing British colonies in North and South America, in Australia and Southern Africa is certainly sufficient to absorb whatever labour or capital could be profitably devoted to colonisation." The Governors of the colonies should be forbidden to acquire in the name of the Crown any accession of territory either in sovereignty or in property without the previous sanction of an Act of Parliament, and no valid title to lands should be obtainable until the formal authority of the Legislature had been procured. New Zealand was certainly at that date not a portion of the Empire, and so valid titles to the possession of land there could not be obtained by British subjects by ostensible purchase from the Maoris. There was the same essential principle at stake that had caused such serious trouble in the years immediately preceding the American Revolution,² when Lord Shelburne was attempting to control

the disposal of waste lands in the Ohio country eighty years before.

Wakefield was determined not to be hampered by such considerations and he painted the possibilities of the colonisation of New Zealand to the other committee in glowing terms. He interested the Hon. Francis Baring, an influential member of the Committee, and in 1837 he assisted him to found a New Zealand Association and among others secured the adhesion of an important Liberal peer, the Earl of Durham, and the radical expositor of colonising theories in the House of Commons, Sir William Molesworth. The humanitarians, however, led by the Church Missionary Society, strongly opposed the Association as objectionable because, as they said, "the colonisation of countries inhabited by uncivilised men [has] been found by universal experience to lead to the infliction upon the aborigines of the greatest wrongs and the most severe injuries," and again, the plans of the Association "would interrupt, if not defeat, the religious improvement and civilisation of the natives of New Zealand, in favourable progress through the labours of the missionaries." The battle was fairly joined, and the Colonial Office represented by Stephen, which already was deeply committed, as we have shown, in clearing up the difficulties in the South Australian colony that Wakefield had abandoned, was strongly opposed to being saddled with another of his incompletely planned schemes. Lord Howick, the Under-Secretary, informed the Association that the Government could not agree to its plans without the provision for strict control, but Wakefield only complied with his suggestions very perfunctorily and went vigorously ahead with his propaganda for arousing public enthusiasm.

The Association launched attacks on the Government's restrictive policy as directed by Lord Glenelg under Stephen's influence both in the House of Lords and in the Commons, where in the session of 1838 Molesworth voiced its complaints against obstructiveness to progressive ideas in unmeasured terms. We have previously shown how other attacks upon Lord Glenelg and his colonial policy were coming from different quarters, and in our next chapter we shall explain how the most serious strictures of all were aroused by the Canadian rebellion. The result of this accumulation of opposition was of special importance to New Zealand, for it is much to be doubted whether the Wakefield

group alone could have forced their plans on an unwilling Government. But they were bold enough to try while the Cabinet and the Colonial Office had their hands full elsewhere. The objections against the organisation of the Association on the faulty lines that were producing so much trouble with the Board of Commissioners in South Australia, were met by its replacement by a joint-stock New Zealand Company, but the new Colonial Secretary, Lord Normanby, who had succeeded Glenelg, refused to grant it a Royal Charter as not complying with necessary safeguards for existing rights and proposing to purchase New Zealand lands on a vast scale to which no valid titles could be obtained.

In such niceties of legality, however, Wakefield with his lack of scruple cared nothing, and he was able to persuade the Earl of Durham to accept the Governorship of the Company and to bring in most of the persons of position from the defunct Association. More still, he was determined to face the Government with accomplished facts, whatever trouble he might bring thereby upon his unwitting settlers. Men with some small amount of capital were persuaded by the Company's glowing prospectuses to purchase lands in parcels of 100 acres or more, although their exact situation was not indicated. A small number of these prospective settlers was got together, and in May 1839 they were despatched to New Zealand and nearly four months later landed on the shores of Cook's Strait to begin the first settlement. It was a rash venture that might have led to disaster far worse than the exasperating land disputes that were to mar the next twenty years.

But neither the colonisers who wished for the annexation of New Zealand nor the humanitarians who opposed it, settled the question as to whether Britain should accept fresh colonial responsibilities or not. The decision was forced from a reluctant Cabinet by what was to happen so frequently in the next fifty years, the intervention of foreign rivals. England might not want to occupy fresh territory so long as it was free to all, but the moment that an exclusive foreign power showed an intention of occupying the territory and shutting out English enterprise, our traditional jealousy of competition in the colonial sphere was aroused and the ministers were moved to action. The old colonial rivalry between England and France, that was so powerful a factor in their rela-

tions in the eighteenth century, had slept after England's naval predominance in the great wars, but now in the 'thirties it was awakening again though not till forty years later was that rivalry to be a prime factor in shaping world history.

For some years certain French adventurers had been proposing bombastic schemes for carving out kingdoms in New Zealand, but they did not mean much, and British fears only began to be seriously aroused when in 1836 the Pope appointed a Frenchman, Monsignor Pompallier, as bishop to supervise the Roman Catholic missions to the Maoris. In 1839 the merchants interested in whaling made serious proposals to the French Government to proclaim sovereignty over a port on the New Zealand coast to serve as the headquarters of the French whalers in the South Pacific. Certain lands had already been purchased from the Maoris in the South Island, and the way clearly lay open to establish a French colony there. The news brought about the intervention of Lord Palmerston, the Foreign Secretary, in the dispute between the New Zealand Company and the humanitarians which had until then been merely a domestic affair of the Colonial Office. Now national interests and prestige were involved, for the entry of a new competitor into the South Pacific where Britain had had a perfectly free hand since the days of Cook, was exceedingly unwelcome. The whole Cabinet took up the matter, and it was decided to leave the matter of British sovereignty in New Zealand no longer in doubt. Whatever the compromise that must be worked between missionaries and settlers, there must be no foreign intervention. New Zealand must be officially annexed, and in June 1839 Lord Normanby informed a deputation from the New Zealand Company headed by Lord Durham that British sovereignty would be proclaimed over the whole group of islands.

The news leaked out to France, and it started a chorus of protest against British greed and strong appeals from the whaling firms to the Government to anticipate the dreaded annexation and protect French interests at once. King Louis-Philippe and his ministers hesitated, for with Palmerston in power they knew that an affront to British interests might frustrate all the carefully prepared plans for Anglo-French unison in Egypt and at Constantinople. The hesitation was fatal to French hopes, for in August 1839 Lord Normanby had sent out orders to Captain

William Hobson to proceed from Sydney to the Bay of Islands and there to treat with the Maori chiefs for the recognition of British sovereignty over the whole of New Zealand.

Hobson arrived at the end of January 1840, and with the aid of Henry Williams and the other missionaries the leading Maori chiefs were summoned to negotiate with him. On February 6th, 1840, agreement was reached and the first signatures were attached to the short Treaty of Waitangi (containing only three articles) which is the foundation deed of the modern Dominion of New Zealand. 'The Queen's sovereignty was recognised as supreme, and in return her protection was promised to all the tribes in their possessions and privileges. The exclusive right of pre-emption of any lands they were disposed to sell was explicitly reserved for the Crown, and thus the exceedingly important principle formulated by the Aborigines Committee was complied with. The result was, in fact, a satisfaction of the essential aims of both the rival British movements. Under the British flag the organisers could now proceed with their schemes for the settlement of this last potential home for a great and prosperous colony of white emigrants. With the exception of the South African interior, New Zealand was the only unallocated area remaining in the temperate zones, and Wakefield's agitation had achieved its crowning success by securing it for the British Empire. But the humanitarians and the missionaries, too, had succeeded, for they had won the unmistakable recognition of the rights of their aboriginal protégés in a solemn treaty that could not be disregarded. When the French colonists landed in New Zealand on August 16th, 1840, to hoist the tricolour over the Banks Peninsula, they found that Captain Stanley had anticipated them by a few days. Armed with Governor Hobson's authority and the proclamation of complete British sovereignty over the South Island that had been issued on June 17th, Stanley had landed at Akaroa on August 10th and by holding a formal court had legally established possession. To deny the British annexation would be nothing less than an act of war, and the French commander dare not undertake the responsibility. New Zealand had thus been indisputably added to the British realms and the setting of the stage for the rise of new nations in the Southern hemisphere was complete. It had begun when Captain Phillip hoisted the Union Jack on the coast of New

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South Wales on January 18th, 1788, and it reached completion when Stanley performed an act of sovereignty at Akaroa fifty-two years later.

CHAPTER V

GOVERNMENTAL REFORM IN THE COLONIES OF SETTLEMENT, 1837-56

WHILE the new free communities of British stock in the Southern hemisphere were thus rising into security and prosperity in the first twenty years of our period, it was gradually becoming apparent that the old system of control from the centre was no longer capable of handling the domestic problems of the new lands to the satisfaction of their settlers. Like other Englishmen they wished to manage their own affairs, and the old representative form of colonial government wherein the final word lay with the British Cabinet did not satisfy this wish. It had been at work in the colonies of British North America ever since the Canadian Constitution Act of 1791, but the rapidly growing communities of British or French descent who were successfully overcoming the difficulties of pioneering in the wilderness found it ever more irksome and cramping. The colonists resented the control, however well-meaning, of a distant Government that could not fully appreciate the difficulties with which only first-hand local knowledge could cope, and while they were quite willing to accept imperial management of external affairs they felt themselves deprived of the inherent privileges of the subjects of the Crown to govern themselves in the business of their own communities.

Representative government was on the decline. Wherever it existed in the colonies of settlement there was a demand to replace it by ampler forms of self-government, and where the control of the Governors was still complete the settlers pressed for reforms that were further reaching than merely representation.

As we saw earlier, representative government was also on the decline in the opposite direction in the tropical colonies where it had been longest in operation. The West Indies might preserve its outward forms, but in reality their elected assemblies were too weak and factious to cope with the pressing problems of societies in decay. The narrow oligarchies which alone possessed the right of electing representatives were incapable of handling their affairs

and to make the machinery of government function at all it was necessary to override the constitutional precedents to which they appealed and place increasing power in the hands of the officials sent out from Great Britain.

The history of the time affords an outstanding instance of the flexibility of British methods of government. They have not been drafted in the study on any systematic or uniform plan, but have been adapted in different cases to suit different needs. On paper it seems inconsistent and paradoxical that at the very time when the power of the people in their own government was being widely extended in some colonies it was being drastically cut down in others. But in reality there were no accusations of inconsistency on these grounds against the statesmen who had to evolve these measures of reform. It was realised even by those who opposed them most strongly that the actual circumstances were the compelling factor in each case, and that what was done in a colony of settlement like Upper Canada was not necessarily applicable to a colony like Jamaica with its utterly different problems. The direction of constitutional evolution could not be everywhere the same.

The demand for self-government in the colonies of settlement became insistent concurrently with the agitation in Great Britain for Parliamentary Reform and to some extent derived from it. When the Reform Act of 1832 had satisfied the mass of people in the United Kingdom that they were really governing themselves, the colonial movements became more urgent. The new devices that were to meet their demands were mainly worked out in the colonies of British North America, but it would be wrong to assume that when they had been shaped in Canada they were applied ready made to other colonies. In reality the evolution in each colony of settlement was different, although the statesmen of the British Cabinet strove to work out their reforms uniformly for colonies of a similar sort. We must therefore say something about the progress of the movement for self-government in each colony in turn, and necessarily British North America takes the first place.

As was stated earlier, the spontaneous emigration of British people to the colonies in North America went on in a steadily rising

flood during the 'twenties, so that by 1830 their population had very greatly increased and Canada especially had become the home of the largest British community outside the central islands. Men had flocked thither to find wider opportunities for themselves, but they took with them their memories of the fight for political representation and democratic power which was in progress in the old country. In Upper Canada they met the immigrants from the United States who had come across the border in search of free land, and radicals and Americans joined in common opposition to the governing classes, whether officials of the Colonial Service or members of the old ruling families of the United Empire Loyalists. They stigmatised them as upholders of vested interests and privilege in Church and State and took credit to themselves as the only apostles of liberty. The American incomers boasted of the democratic freedom of election that they had enjoyed in the United States just across the Lakes, and contrasted it with the restrictions of an *effête* monarchy, and though there was no basis of fact in their denunciations of tyranny, they encouraged the aspirations for political reform that filled the Scotsmen who formed such a large proportion of the British immigrants into Upper Canada. Thus in the political struggles of the period we can perceive two streams of ideas from which the opposition to the Government drew their inspiration—American democracy and Scottish radicalism. Since these streams provided many of the leaders, they have left a very strong impress upon Canadian development and have made it conspicuously different from the contemporary political movements in middle-class England.

Ever since the American War of 1812 the government of the British colonies in North America had been a principal object of preoccupation to the ministers and officials of the Colonial Office, though it did not attract much public interest in England. There attention was mainly focussed on the problems of governing the French in Quebec, but the most important developments were really taking place in Upper Canada, where two strongly marked parties of Tories and Reformers were opposed and had ample opportunities of expounding their rival views in the columns of a widely-read press. From 1818 to 1828 the government of the province was in the hands of Sir Peregrine Maitland, a soldier trained under the strict discipline of Wellington, who believed that

his highest duty was to obey implicitly the orders he received from the Tory Secretary of State, Lord Bathurst. Maitland was incapable of exercising political tact in dealing with radicals whom he suspected of disloyalty and the desire to promote the annexation of Canada to the United States. The principal question of his Governorship was the admission of aliens to British citizenship; this was of great importance, for some of the principal leaders of the Opposition were of American birth and so unable to exercise political functions in British territory. In 1828, however, a retroactive measure was passed by which all persons who had received grants of land, held public office or been settled in Canada before 1820 were admitted to British citizenship on taking the oath of allegiance. This act of comprehension was of first-rate importance to English-speaking Canada, for it encouraged the growth of loyalty to the Canadian idea among men who, while they felt themselves shut out as aliens from their adopted community, had been drawn into dependence upon American inspiration. Now with a comprehensive British citizenship the field was set for the first stirrings of a new Canadian nationhood, not independent of but included within a wider imperial loyalty.

Meanwhile in Lower Canada on the other hand the growing political consciousness of the hitherto passive French-Canadians was being directed to a narrow racialism that gave most serious concern to the British Governors of the province. Men of British stock were only a small minority of the electorate and the Assembly was predominantly French, being largely composed of dissatisfied men who having been educated for the professions found it impossible to make a living in such a small community. They were led by the Speaker of the House of Assembly, Louis Papineau, a man of vigorous personality and narrow racial temper who aspired to preserve Canada entirely for the French-Canadians and to extrude all English-speakers. But he found himself entirely unable to advance towards his goal, for the executive Government of the province was wholly in the hands of the Governor who drew his advice either from his own staff whom he had brought out with him from England or from members of the English-speaking minority because he found leading French-Canadians reluctant to co-operate. Thus there was an acute division between the Governor and his nominated Council on the one hand and on the other

the elected Assembly who alone had power to raise taxes. The Assembly would not vote supplies for the carrying-on of the essential functions of government until their grievances were redressed, but they obstinately maintained their claim to the whole of the customs duties levied at Quebec, the port of arrival of ocean transport during the summer months when the navigation of the St. Lawrence was open. A large and growing proportion of both imports and exports really belonged to Upper Canada and the retention of the whole of the duties for the treasury of the lower province was therefore a distinct injustice, and the Home Cabinet were seriously concerned with the particularism and narrow selfishness which they felt were dangerously impeding the progress of British North America. Governmental reforms were clearly essential, but every statesman who handled Canadian affairs was baffled by the complexities of the situation and unwilling to propose any clear-cut or drastic solution. If the Imperial Government was to do its duty and not merely let things slide as it had done in the American colonies of the eighteenth century, old precedents were useless and new political devices must be invented. What they should be, no one knew either in England or Canada, but for twenty years or more the subject commanded much of the thought of those who were concerned with colonial government. The residence of the Governor-General was in Quebec and naturally by far the larger share of attention was directed to the problems of Lower Canada, the Lieutenant-Governor, who was nominally subordinate, being left a practically free hand to deal with Upper Canada and report upon its affairs to the Colonial Office according to his own judgment, as did the Governors of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick for their own colonies.

The Earl of Dalhousie, who was Governor-General of Canada from 1820 to 1828, had fought hard to obtain a permanent provision for the essential expenses by the establishment of a civil list, but entirely failed to overcome the obstructiveness of the Assembly and had to pay his way by the temporary expedient of drawing upon funds provided from the Imperial Exchequer. He suggested that the deadlock could only be broken by re-uniting Upper and Lower Canada and thus out-numbering the obstructive French by a majority of English-speaking members in the common legislature.

A bill for the purpose was considered in the Imperial Parliament in 1822, and though it was not persisted with, the threat thus to swamp the French-Canadian majority with Upper Canadian votes drove Papineau and other irreconcilables to thoughts of revolution. They incessantly denounced what they called "British tyranny," though in reality the Imperial ministers were making constant efforts during the later 'twenties and early 'thirties to find ways of conciliation. But they met with much obstruction and matters in Canada were unmistakably going from bad to worse as years went on, despite all the palliatives that had been applied.

In 1834 Papineau carried the Assembly with him in formulating the grievances of Lower Canada in ninety-two resolutions which practically demanded autonomy and the removal of almost all Imperial control. Certain of the extremer Radicals in the British House of Commons supported these demands in the sacred cause of liberty, but they were impossible of acceptance by the Imperial Cabinet, for they would have placed the English-speaking majority in Lower Canada wholly at the mercy of the French extremists. It was determined to send out a new Governor-General of political rather than military experience to make a thorough inquiry on the spot as to what could be done in the way of compromise, and the Earl of Gosford was chosen and placed at the head of a strong commission of investigation. But Gosford found himself unable to make any headway or to conciliate the French malcontents in the least. Papineau was louder than ever in his denunciations of British tyranny and at last he completely lost his head and after the 1837 session of the Assembly he determined on armed insurrection, a step of incalculable folly in the face of the disciplined British troops whom the Governor-General had at his command.

Meanwhile in Upper Canada things were taking a course along the more orderly lines of parliamentary agitation similar to those which were followed in the concurrent struggles over the Reform Bill in England which were closely watched by the Canadian Radicals. The mass of the people in Upper Canada were too busy to take an active interest in politics, for their energies were wholly absorbed in the task of carving new farms from the wilderness and their inherent loyalty to the Empire was no more thought

of or questioned by them than if they had been resident in an English county. Discontent was neither widespread nor deep, but what there was came from religious and economic grievances. The Established Churches of England and Scotland held a privileged position, and the dissenters, mostly Wesleyans, although they were in a majority, had no share in the endowments set apart by the Crown for the support of religion. These endowments were in the form of vacant lands called "Clergy Reserves" and, since the Churches had not the means to develop them, they lay waste and retarded the progress of the settlements around them.

In the political struggle in Upper Canada the active parts were played by two rival groups, mainly composed of educated and professional men who were practising in the longer-settled districts of the province. The Tories, the defenders of things as they were, were led by an oligarchy of descendants of the United Empire Loyalists who had first opened up Upper Canada by their immigration from the United States during and immediately after the American Revolution. They were stigmatised by their opponents as the "Family Compact," for they were closely connected by ties of relationship and inter-marriage. They had a strong hold on the official positions in the colony by their many years of public service and formed an exclusive social clique which surrounded the Lieutenant-Governor and was accused by its opponents of undue influence in advising the policy that he should pursue and of giving biased evidence to the British Cabinet on Canadian affairs.

On the other side were the Reformers who attacked the Family Compact as the conservators of privilege and vested interest both in Church and State. Their first advocate had been Robert Gourlay, a newcomer from Scotland with radical ideas, who revealed the shortcomings of the oligarchic régime in a series of scathingly written sketches, on which he was proceeded against for sedition in direct imitation of the repressive methods then being employed in Great Britain. But the persecution and expulsion of Gourlay in 1820 had opened up the flood-gates of criticism which never afterwards could be closed. His pen was taken up by a journalist of greater stamina, William Lyon Mackenzie, whose anti-Government paper, despite all attempts to stop it, whether by

legal or forceful means, provided a never-failing platform for the propagation of radical ideas. Mackenzie became the leader of the Reformers in the Assembly, and for ten years the fight swayed backward and forward at election after election, sometimes the Reformers winning a majority at the polls and sometimes the Tories, thus proving that the fight was one between rival Canadian parties and not of the colony as a whole against tyrannical government from outside, as has sometimes been mistakenly asserted.

In 1836 the struggle came to a head owing to tactlessness and impatience on both sides. The dominant Tory party were able to persuade the newly appointed Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Francis Bond Head, that the outpourings of some of Mackenzie's more extreme and injudicious supporters covered disloyalty and an actual conspiracy to dismember the Empire by handing over Upper Canada to the United States. Head unwisely listened to their advice, and, abandoning his constitutional impartiality, he practically took the lead of the Tory party and called upon the electorate to outvote the Reformers as a token of their loyalty to the Crown and Empire. This was a most serious and injudicious step, for it forced upon the Reformers the appearance of rebels when they were really only in political opposition according to traditional British practice. Luckily a nucleus of the more thoughtful of the Reform leaders stood firm against Head's coup and carried the bulk of their followers with them. But Mackenzie and a handful of hot-headed enthusiasts took up arms and marched against the Governor at Toronto, the capital of the Province. The attempt was hopeless, and when the troops of the garrison advanced against the malcontents, they broke and fled. Many, and Mackenzie among them, fled across Lake Ontario to the American shore and within a week order was restored. The Upper Canadians by their almost unanimous refusal to assist the insurrection in any way had shown that, while they wished to secure reform, they were determined to do so by proper constitutional means and not by the destructive method of armed rebellion.

In Lower Canada the rebellion was somewhat more serious. Papineau fled to the United States soon after fighting began, but some of his lieutenants excited the *habitants* to violent insurrection especially in the district round Montreal where sedition was most rife. When troops advanced to disperse them, they resisted

but the resulting fighting was without any military significance and on a very small scale. Ill-organised and half-armed insurgents could do nothing against capably led and disciplined soldiers and within a month the Government at Quebec was in complete control of the whole province. But then came the real test of statesmanship. The rebels had been put down by force both in Upper and Lower Canada, and the inconsiderable minority of colonists that had alone supported the rebellion in either province were at the mercy of the Crown. Fortunately the men on the spot were able to report at once that the immense majority of the Canadians, both French and English-speaking, had had no sympathy with the insurgents, but were undoubtedly anxious to see their grievances remedied by constitutional means.

The Imperial Cabinet and Parliament remembered the lessons of the American Revolution sixty years before and realised the dangers that would arise from allowing those grievances to fester until an extremist minority could convince the passive majority that no remedy for their grievances could be obtained within the framework of legality. Had the British Government been tyrannical, as some of its opponents had proclaimed, it would have undertaken measures of drastic repression, but such a policy would have been a repudiation of all that had been done since the conquest from France when conciliation and toleration had been promised to the Canadians, promises that had been faithfully kept for three-quarters of a century by every successive British Government. Repression would provide no solution to the problem, but things could not go back exactly to where they were before the first shots had been fired. The insurrections had been militarily negligible, but they started an avalanche of reform that was fraught with pregnant consequences to the Empire, and, as we can now perceive, they marked a turning-point in history.

The lead in making the decision as to what was to be done as the first step was taken by Lord John Russell, the most active minister in Lord Melbourne's Liberal Cabinet. He persuaded his colleagues to call into counsel the group of Colonial Reformers who, as we have seen earlier, had been devoting thought to the problems of the colonies for some years. Their leader both by virtue of his ancestral position, his wide and successful experience as an ambassador and his acknowledged personal ability was John Lambton,

Earl of Durham, and the Cabinet determined to appoint him Governor-General of all the British colonies in North America and to send him out with unprecedented powers to inquire into all the circumstances and recommend what ought to be done. The Canadian constitutions were suspended by Act of Parliament and the ministry gave practically full discretion to Lord Durham to do what he thought best without being hampered by minute directions from Downing Street.

Durham sailed for Quebec in the spring of 1838 taking with him a strong staff, including Charles Buller, a young and active member of the House of Commons, who had played a prominent part in the discussions of the Colonial Reformers, and Edward Gibbon Wakefield, the stormy petrel of colonial politics. Each of them took an active part in the inquiries in Canada, Buller directing his attention particularly to political matters, and Wakefield to economic, especially to land and emigration questions, as was natural in view of his colonial theories. But it was Durham who was the master-mind, and it was he who, during the summer and autumn of 1838, before he was driven to resign at the end of the year by the intrigues of Lord Brougham, prepared the main outlines of a Report which was completed after his return to England in 1839. It is perhaps the most celebrated of Colonial State Papers and it places him in the forefront of the builders of the modern British Empire. However his assistants may have aided him in minor points, there is no doubt that the outstanding ideas of statesmanship which the Report exhibits were Durham's own.

It is unnecessary here to enter upon the details of his Governorship or the secondary recommendations of the Report. They belong to Canadian history, but the main lines of policy that he put forward have been of vital importance far beyond the limits of British North America. Durham spent practically the whole of his few months of office in Canada and never visited the Maritime Provinces of which he was also nominally chief governor. His first recommendations were therefore directed to clearing up the special dangers in the situation in Lower Canada, and there he directly followed lines that had previously been laid down. This ought to be remembered as a corrective to the exaggerated measure of praise that has sometimes been uncritically allotted to him. He was convinced that the whole of North America north of the

United States boundary must be British and that the narrow racialism of the French-Canadians stood in the way. He believed that to unify the provinces and make them safe for the Empire they must be wholly Anglicised, and to hasten the process he recommended that the partition of Upper and Lower Canada as enacted in the Canada Act of 1791 must be repealed. The union of the two provinces would add the English voters in Quebec to the more conservative party in Upper Canada and so ensure a majority in favour of the orderly development of a united province under the British Crown. He believed in the maintenance of close Imperial control over matters of inter-Imperial importance and among these he included foreign relations, defence, external trade under the provisions of the old Navigation Acts, so far as they were still in force, and the power of amending the Constitution. Lastly, he regarded the waste and unoccupied Crown lands as homes for new immigrants of British stock and in no way to be reserved for allocation merely to serve the narrow interests of those who already resided in the colonies. These matters, according to him, should be reserved for decision by the Government and Parliament of the United Kingdom in the interest of the Empire as a whole. In all this the Report contained little that was novel but merely re-emphasised and demanded the continuance with renewed vigour of measures and policies that had long been in mind.

So far the Report marked no advance, for extra-Canadian relations were to be managed as before, but it was in regard to internal affairs that Durham made his momentous contribution to progress. He realised that all the troubles of Upper Canada and many of those of Lower Canada proceeded from the thwarted desires of their people for self-government, and self-government in as ample a measure as that possessed by their cousins in the adjacent United States. Local affairs ought not to be interfered with by Governors acting upon orders from London, even though those orders had been drafted with the best intent. The colonists ought no longer to be kept in leading strings on the grounds of their weakness or political inexperience. They must deal with their own affairs for themselves, whatever mistakes they made; they must be themselves responsible, and at first this was the sole meaning attached to the term "responsible government" by all

those who contended for reform in the colonies of settlement, whether in Upper Canada, Nova Scotia or New South Wales.

But for an executive Governor, appointed and directed from London, who chose his own ministers to carry out his policy and had to control their actions with the knowledge that at any moment he might be attacked in the House of Commons, how was it possible to obey two masters? How could he obey the orders of Downing Street and at the same time carry out the desires of the majority in the local legislature which was sometimes held by one party and sometimes by another with directly opposite views? This was the crucial question of self-government, and it is Durham's outstanding title to fame that he succeeded in finding a workable solution. The lines of this solution had been hammered out by lesser men in the discussions of the six or seven years immediately preceding his appointment, but it was Durham who brought the device into the forefront of politics.

The essential thing was the reading of a new meaning into the word "responsible" and applying it not to the representative elected by the people but to the executive ministers who carried on the functions of government. The essential principle had been evolved in England between the Revolution of 1688 and the ministry of the Younger Pitt, but it does not seem to have been realised there and certainly was not understood by the disputants in the colonies before the 'thirties, because it was masked under the forms and names of an earlier period of the monarchy. Nominally the King chose his own men to hold the great offices of State and carry on his policy as the Tudors had done. But in reality, ever since George III had been forced by public opinion to place all effective power in the hands of Pitt as Prime Minister and to accept his nominees for office because they alone could persuade the House of Commons to accept their measures and find money to carry them out, the old forms had a new meaning. The King still reigned, but he did not rule. His ministers might remain nominally his appointed servants, but in reality their responsibility was to the House of Commons and so to the electorate. This was the fact that became clear to some of the Canadian Reformers in the years immediately preceding the insurrection, and it was the application of the British form of government to the internal affairs of Canada that they meant when they asked for "responsible

government " in the middle 'thirties. Durham recommended with incisive force that they should be granted what they asked, and that in regard to the internal affairs of the re-united province of Canada the Governors henceforward should follow the advice of ministers who were acceptable to the Lower or popularly elected House and could command a majority there in favour of their measures.

But neither the Imperial Cabinet nor Parliament was yet prepared to accept such a fundamental change in colonial government, for, as Lord John Russell logically argued, the executive could not be responsible at one and the same time in the Assembly and to imperial authority. If the proposed system were effective, it would necessarily mean the abandonment of imperial control, and, as Russell and others thought, secession and the break-up of the Empire. Durham replied by pointing to a division of the functions of government, and he certainly had in mind the similar division in the federation of the United States. In internal affairs the Governors would act only upon the advice of their ministers, but in external the Imperial Government would still be supreme, as was the Federal Government in the Republic. This device might be contrary to logic, but it resolved the dilemma. Ultimately, although Durham possibly did not foresee it, all power must pass into the hands of the elected representatives of the colony, as in fact has happened, but the gradualness of the process of evolution has avoided any sudden breach such as Russell and many other Englishmen feared in 1839.

The union of Upper and Lower Canada was effected by the Canada Act of 1840, and Poulett Thomson (later Lord Sydenham) was appointed Governor-General. He supported Durham's ideas, but realised that, since they could not be carried out by formal action, he must move gradually forward towards them by working in harmony with the party that secured a majority at the first election in the united province (1841). But Sydenham died before the end of that year, and his successor, Sir Charles Bagot, was left to carry out the policy. Practically responsible government was thus brought imperceptibly into effect without any formal action. Lord Metcalfe, who was sent out to succeed Bagot in 1843, was ordered by the ministry of Sir Robert Peel to make imperial control more effective in view of the dangerous situation arising

over the boundary disputes with the United States, but his abrupt dismissal of the Liberal executive, which commanded a majority in the Assembly, and his nomination of ministers chosen by himself threw Canadian affairs back into the melting-pot and aroused a new agitation that was approaching danger point by 1845. Like demands for responsible government were being made by the majority party in Nova Scotia under the lead of Joseph Howe with great insistence and a shrewd political sense which practically commanded unanimous support throughout that undoubtedly loyal community.

Salvation came from the great political overturn in Great Britain in 1846. Peel's critical decision to abandon the protectionist system and to establish complete freedom of trade according to the gospel preached by Richard Cobden brought into power the Manchester School and the apostles of *laissez-faire* doctrines. They believed that the colonies of settlement were certain to go the same way to independence that the United States had taken, and they wished to oppose no obstacles to the process. In their view if the colonies were made complete masters of their affairs, whether they were nominally attached to the Empire or were not, the settlers would be more contented and prosperous and would purchase more British manufactures, which was all that mattered. Thus views as to trade policy were once more applied to colonial matters, but now in exactly the opposite direction to those of the mercantile empire.

In the new Liberal Cabinet the Colonial Secretaryship fell to Lord Howick (now Earl Grey) who had been so active, as we have seen, in the discussions about colonial policy for several years and was a convinced supporter of the views of the colonial theorists. Grey was certain to play a much more active part in the direction of the Colonial Office than most of his predecessors had done, and his first measure was to appoint Lord Durham's son-in-law, the Earl of Elgin, to the Governor-Generalship of Canada, and to give him a free hand. The Cabinet fully recognised that this meant complete acquiescence in a system of responsible government in Canada, for Lord Elgin let it be known that he intended to take up the position of a moderator prepared to aid the Canadians to acquire experience in self-government by drawing upon British constitutional precedents.

While Canada was becoming completely mistress of her own affairs and working out a practical Parliamentary system under his tuition, the other colonies of British North America were taking advantage of the new policy according to their own special circumstances. Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick and Newfoundland were too weak and too little developed politically to dispense with the skilled control of professional Governors in the management of their affairs. The colonists were too deeply involved in the economic struggle to make a living to spare much time for politics, and there were no well-organised parties in their Assemblies, to whom the Governors could entrust the lead in government. Responsible government was clearly no panacea, and in practice to save the smaller colonies from muddle and financial ruin the Governors were bound to continue their personal guidance of affairs, and, without arousing opposition or attracting much outside attention, they generally continued to do so down to the confederation period twenty years later.

Nova Scotia, on the other hand, was in many ways the most politically experienced of all the British North American colonies. There were two well-marked and well-organised parties that were accustomed to all the niceties of parliamentary debate, and it was in the classical despatches of Earl Grey to Sir John Harvey, the Governor, that the essential principles involved in the working-out of responsible government can best be studied. The first principle was that the offices of state must be divided into two classes as historical evolution had divided them in the United Kingdom. The larger class contained those offices like judgeships and professional appointments which were not concerned with political functions. For their holders there was to be fixity of tenure during good behaviour, but they were not allowed to enter the legislature or become involved in its party struggles. On the other hand for a very small number of offices of influence in the formulation and direction of policy Sir John Harvey was advised that tenure should only be "during pleasure." This did not imply that the Governor should exercise his own caprice in the nomination of those to fill them. He was instructed to select those persons who were proposed to him by the party commanding a majority in the elected House, on the understanding that, when they lost the confidence of the representatives or the electorate, they would place their

resignations in his hands, so that he might make new appointments from the party that had defeated them. The Governor was directed to carry on the administration in accordance with the advice of these political ministers, and thus was placed in the position of a limited constitutional ruler, governing the state according to the wishes of the electorate as expressed by the votes of their representatives.

None of these fundamental changes was introduced by formal legislative enactment of Parliament, but, quietly and with a minimum of fuss, by the traditional English method of an unobtrusive change of political convention a revolution of outstanding importance was introduced into the government of the colonies of settlement. A simple despatch from Downing Street gave to the electors in the colonies that were fitted for it the same control of and responsibility for their domestic affairs as was exercised by the people of the United Kingdom.

The change was accomplished without trouble in Nova Scotia, but Canada had to pass through another dangerous crisis before smoother water was reached. Elgin found his office anything but a bed of roses. In Upper Canada, or Ontario as it was coming to be called, compensation was paid under an Act of the legislature to those persons who had suffered losses at the time of the insurrection, and in 1848 a similar measure was introduced by the responsible ministers to give like compensation in Quebec. Many of those who would benefit by it had been on the side of the insurgents, and an outcry arose from the loyalists that this was putting a premium upon rebellion. The Governor-General was urged to veto the bill, that is to say to revert to the old system and exercise his personal power independently of his ministers. But, despite dangerous rioting that was meant to influence his decision, Elgin stood firm; the matter was clearly Canadian, and he refused to depart from the new policy of ministerial responsibility. The assent of the Governor-General was attached to the bill, and by this courageous and undoubtedly judicious action agitation was quieted and for some years Canada was left in comparative freedom from constitutional disputes. Popular interest passed instead to the serious economic difficulties with which British North America had to cope, as will appear in a later chapter.

In the Australian colonies progress in government was later than in Canada. Down to the late 'thirties interest was mainly concentrated upon land questions, and in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land upon the social and political difficulties that arose from the existence side by side of free men, emancipists and convicts. Equality of status before the law had to be secured before the question of self-government could become one of practical politics. By Acts of Parliament of 1823 and 1828 the Governor who had previously been autocratic was assisted by a small Council of nominated officials who were wholly dependent upon him, but, as the number of free settlers entering the colony rose, this constitution was found insupportable and a demand for representative government arose under the lead of William Charles Wentworth, who had already taken a prominent part in the movement of the emancipists against the oligarchic influence of the exclusive official party.

The newcomers were mostly small farmers or artisans with little or no capital, and they had a very different outlook from the employing class, whether exclusives or emancipists, who until the 'thirties had alone been vocal in the affairs of New South Wales. They had supported the system of convict transportation because it provided them with supplies of cheap labour and had kept wages low whether they were paid to free immigrants or to convicts who had completed their sentences or had been granted tickets-of-leave. But in the middle 'thirties a stream of petitions began to pour into the Colonial Office appealing for the complete abolition of transportation and the conversion of New South Wales into a colony of free men.

In 1840, as was stated in an earlier chapter, the desired reform was achieved. Transportation of convicts to New South Wales ceased in 1840 and, although parties were sent to Van Diemen's Land for some years longer, the way was cleared for new issues. All the inhabitants of New South Wales had now the same status in the eyes of the law, and the same political position had been reached as that in the colonies of British North America fifty years before where differences of legal status had never existed. But the rate of political change in the new colonies was much more rapid than in the old, for the Australians of 1840 were more politically conscious than the Canadians had been in 1790 and

there were no difficulties like those in French Quebec to impede reform.

There were two concurrent agitations going on in New South Wales, the first in the outlying settlements and the second round Sydney and each had a lasting influence on Australian history. Each demanded "self-government," but they meant different things. The detached communities of farmers and pastoralists, first in the Port Phillip District round the newly-founded centre of Melbourne, and second on Moreton Bay, where Brisbane now stands, claimed that the control of their affairs by an autocratic Governor in far-distant Sydney led to neglect and mismanagement, and in each case they agitated for separation from New South Wales and the erection of new governments of their own. "Self-government" to them meant local control of their own affairs, and, though the agitators also desired a popular share in their government, it was separation that was their main demand.

In the older settled parts of New South Wales separation was opposed by all parties, for they believed that it weakened their case for representative institutions. The dividing line between the parties was drawn by economic questions, which were thus from the beginning fundamental factors in Australian politics. On the one hand was a new popular party which was mainly recruited among recently-arrived immigrants and was strongly infected with the Chartist and trade-union ideals of the English and Scottish Radicals. Its members sought for higher wages and better working conditions, while the rival party, which drew its strength from the employers and property owners, strove to retain the supplies of cheap labour from which they had prospered. When their efforts to secure the continuance of transportation and convict assignment failed, they strove to replace it by organising the importation of Indian coolies. The fight against this implanted in the minds of Australian working-men the beginnings of what has become one of their deepest-seated feelings, which led in the next generation to the formulation and victory of the universally supported "White Australia" policy.

In England the desire of the people of New South Wales for a share in the control of their own affairs was sympathetically viewed by all parties, and in 1842 a new Constitution Act was piloted through Parliament by Lord Stanley, the Colonial Secretary in

Peel's Cabinet. It did not differ much from what had been planned by Lord Russell in Lord Melbourne's Whig administration. Provision was made for a Legislative Council of thirty-six members, twelve of whom were to be nominated by the Crown and twenty-four popularly elected on a fairly liberal property-owning franchise. Land policy and the revenue derived from Crown lands were to be reserved from discussion in the Legislative Council for decision by the Home Government, which had recently appointed the Colonial Land and Emigration Commission especially to further emigration to Australia from the funds arising from the disposal of waste lands. Otherwise, the legislature was empowered to make enactments concerning all the internal affairs of New South Wales, but provision was made for the future subdivision of the colony, and the justice of the demands of the Port Phillip settlers for self-government was thus implicitly recognised. The Act brought into operation for the first time a measure of representative government in Australia, but the executive power was still wholly retained in the hands of the Governor whose policy was directed from Downing Street and who was assisted only by officials chosen by himself. A great step forward had been made, but New South Wales still lagged behind Canada and Nova Scotia in its powers of self-government.

The Governor of New South Wales, when the new constitution came into operation, was the strong and able official Sir George Gipps, who was determined to maintain his executive control unimpaired according to the provisions of the Act, while the elected members of the Legislative Council aspired to sway his policy by their power over the revenue raised from taxation. They did not acquiesce in the reservation of land questions from their discussion, and thus a tussle began between Legislature and Governor that lasted without intermission until Gipps laid down his office in 1846. Meanwhile the agitation in the Port Phillip District for separation from New South Wales grew in intensity. The Melbourne people demanded "responsible government," but this did not yet mean that ministerial responsibility to the legislature which was being sought in British North America. It simply meant the power of self-government which they would secure if Port Phillip were separated from the older-settled parts of the colony.

In New South Wales proper, the lessons of the constitutional

agitation in British North America were bearing fruit; and the leaders of the popular party were gradually coming to see that ministerial responsibility to the Legislature must be their ultimate goal. It was only gradually that this was realised, and the movement was involved and cut across by a bitter dispute with the Colonial Office concerning the proposed revival of convict transportation to which we have already referred. Seeing that such a measure was in direct opposition to popular opinion in the colony, the proposal was a distinct retrogression, and it naturally gave the idea that the British Cabinet and the Colonial Office were insincere in their progress towards colonial self-government and vacillating in their decisions.

This unfortunate impression was intensified when Lord Grey took over the Colonial Secretaryship in 1846. In Canada, as we have seen, he furthered the progress towards responsible government, but in the Australian colonies he showed all the defects of the doctrinaire school of thought to which he belonged. The people of the colonies resented bitterly their exclusion from discussions which determined the form of government under which they were compelled to live, and the Colonial Secretary's contempt for their opinion on matters by which the rights and liberties of the whole community might be compromised. Grey's proposals were thrown into shape within a very short time after his taking up office in 1846, and they excited almost unanimous opposition when they were debated in the colony during 1847 and 1848. He proposed to separate the Port Phillip District from New South Wales and in place of direct popular election to erect throughout the whole of the Australian colonies municipal councils which should be the electing bodies to the Lower House of a bi-cameral central legislature. He had outlined an exactly similar and elaborate scheme for the infant colony of New Zealand, and it is remarkable to note how little he realised the actual position in those struggling communities or how unsuitable for them was a complicated tangle of constitutional machinery.

In the opposition in New South Wales the lead was taken by William Charles Wentworth who had played such a prominent part in all the earlier contests for constitutional reform. But in this case Wentworth lost touch with the mass of the people and became exceedingly unpopular because he supported the revival

of transportation in the interest of the employing class. Grey had taken up the proposals made by Stanley and Gladstone, and in 1848 he informed the Governor of New South Wales, Sir Charles Fitzroy, that the abolition Order-in-Council had been revoked and that new cargoes of convicts were being despatched to the colony. The receipt of this news raised extreme popular hostility and provoked public demonstrations in Sydney and elsewhere just when the constitutional proposals were being debated in the Legislative Council. The lead was wrested from Wentworth and his conservative associates by the popular party because they were known to favour transportation to serve their own economic interests, and in the early months of 1849 the masses of the population, largely composed of new immigrants, expressed their detestation of transportation at great public meetings in resolutions that were of unmistakable seriousness. The decision to revive transportation was stigmatised as a breach of faith with those who had been assisted to emigrate, and it was resolved that it was indispensable to the well-being of New South Wales "and to the satisfactory conduct of its affairs, that its government should no longer be administered by the remote, ill-informed and irresponsible Colonial Office, but by ministers chosen from and responsible to the colonists in accordance with the principles of the British constitution."

In these resolutions we have the climax of the movement. It had taken a different course from that in Canada and Nova Scotia, but had reached the same point. Just as in Canada the single event of Elgin's action over the Rebellion Losses Bill marked the complete establishment of colonial self-government, so in New South Wales the unanimous popular action of refusing to allow the convict ships to land their cargoes of exiles convinced Grey that he must give way and acquiesce in what could no longer be denied. He had already withdrawn his proposals for constitutional reform in 1848, and in November 1849 he wrote to Sir Charles Fitzroy to inform him that no more convicts would be sent to New South Wales. That accomplished one part of the colonists' desires, but there was to be more fumbling in Downing Street before a final settlement was reached.

Early in 1849 Grey had attempted to get help to extricate himself from the constitutional morass in which he was floundering by

reviving an old advisory body that had long been neglected. He decided to refer the whole question of the constitutional position in the Australian colonies to a committee of the Privy Council and seek its recommendations. The committee in its report in the late spring of 1849 gave an interesting historical survey of the growth of colonial constitutions since the Canadian Constitution Act of 1791, but made few positive recommendations of any value. They advised the separation of the Port Phillip District from New South Wales and the extension of representative government to it, to South Australia and to Van Diemen's Land. The appointment of a Governor-General over the whole of the Australian colonies was suggested with power to call a General Assembly appointed by the separate legislatures.

Grey at once accepted the report as practically coinciding with his own ideas, and in the parliamentary session of 1849 a bill was introduced into the House of Commons to give effect to the proposals. But the bill made no advance towards the essential demand of the colonists for executive authority to be placed in the hands of responsible ministers and it was so warmly opposed by their friends that it had to be withdrawn before it reached a second reading. Molesworth led the critics both in 1849 and in the following session of 1850, when the Commons had many debates upon Australian affairs. He succeeded in introducing many liberalising amendments into the bill of 1850 which was ultimately passed and carried New South Wales a little further, but he could not secure the acceptance of the fundamental principle he enunciated, that the colonies should be given complete self-government excepting in matters of an obviously imperial nature. The Colonial Office should no longer have the power to disallow colonial Acts or to instruct the Governors as to their conduct in the local affairs of their colonies. But this was to go much further than Grey or his colleagues were prepared for, and though the Act of 1850 placed considerably more power in the hands of the Legislative Council and certainly extended the franchise to include a larger proportion of the unpropertied classes, it did not go far to satisfy the demand for self-government. Grey maintained in his despatches to Governor Fitzroy that the main purpose of the Act was to establish the new Colony of Victoria, and he explicitly refused to admit the wisdom of vesting official appointments in the representatives of

popular opinion. He declined to accept the recommendation of the Legislative Council for the sole power to deal with matters of local importance and refused in so many words to vary the procedure which was followed throughout the Empire and apply "an untried scheme" in New South Wales.

Such an extraordinary statement seems to imply that Grey did not realise the nature of the changes to which he had himself consented in Canada and Nova Scotia, but the leaders in the New South Wales Legislature certainly did so. Wentworth was very unpopular with the electorate, but his was still the outstanding mind in the colony, and he now grasped the implications of responsible government fully and persuaded the Legislative Council in their replies to Grey's despatches to demand full powers. The wrangle between them and the Colonial Office dragged on for three years, but at last the climax was reached in 1854 after Grey had left office, when the Legislative Councils of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia almost simultaneously sent draft constitutions to London with the petition that Her Majesty's Government should secure their embodiment in Acts of Parliament. It fell to Lord John Russell in 1855 to take the final step and introduce Constitution Bills which, by removing the power of the Imperial Government to disallow Acts of merely domestic importance, practically accepted what a shrewd and informed observer at the time called "little less than a legislative Declaration of Independence on the part of the Australian colonies."

In 1839 Russell had definitely stated in his despatches and in Parliament that he was not prepared to accept any arrangement which would finally exclude the government of the United Kingdom from dealing with colonial matters even such as were of purely local interest, because he could find no precise definition which would delimit the colonial from the imperial sphere. It was for this reason that he had refused to carry out the recommendations of Durham's Report because he believed that they would infallibly accelerate separation.

Even as late as the Commons' debates of 1850 his speeches showed that he had not changed this belief, but at last the course of Canadian affairs brought home to him the fact that responsible government did not necessarily mean the sudden weakening of the imperial tie. Elgin's success had been achieved, not by a narrow

insistence on rights and the minutiae of constitutional definitions, but by the exercise of tact and free and frank assistance and advice to his responsible ministers, when they asked for it. Moral influence had gone far to compensate the loss of direct power consequent upon the surrender of patronage to ministers responsible only to the Legislature. Russell realised this from the lessons of Elgin's experience, and saw at last that the best way to escape from his dilemma of distinguishing between colonial and imperial matters was not by any hard and fast definition but by cautious opportunism and dealing with each matter as it arose. The substitution of the realist and practical statesmanship of Russell for the doctrinaire logic-chopping of Grey swept the way clear for the solution of the Australian problem.

The new Constitution Bill was introduced during the session of 1855, and, despite the opposition of Wentworth and the squatter landlords of New South Wales who found spokesmen in the Commons to voice their objections, it had a comparatively smooth passage, for most members were convinced that the mass of Australians should have their way. Wentworth wanted responsible government, it is true, but at the same time he wanted rigid safeguards for the rights of property against Australian radicalism. Russell would have no such rigid provisions, for he believed that they were full of danger. By granting to the new legislature the full right to amend the constitution as set out in the Act of Parliament he put the coping stone upon his work. Power henceforward would be in the hands of the colonists themselves, and this decision was entirely consistent with the traditions of British constitutional development. The absence of precise distinctions left room for compromise and for the gradual growth of a body of constitutional custom to be varied as need arose.

The actual working-out of the new system of ministerial responsibility in the Australian colonies fell to the Governors on the spot as it had in British North America. New and flexible Instructions were issued to Sir William Denison who had succeeded Sir Charles Fitzroy as Governor of New South Wales early in 1855. He submitted these Instructions to the Legislative Council at the end of the year, and although there were many difficulties which he had to handle before a new responsible ministry could take office after a general election, by tact and

persuasiveness Denison overcame them. By the end of 1856 a ministry dependent upon a majority in the House of Assembly was in power in New South Wales, and the way was clear for the continuous operation of responsible government. The adoption of the new system was almost simultaneous in Victoria and South Australia, and Van Diemen's Land, whither transportation had ceased in 1853, entered upon a new life of self-government as the colony of Tasmania. Queensland was not finally separated from New South Wales and organised until 1859, while Western Australia was admittedly still too weak to be forced to depend upon herself. It was not until 1890 that responsible government was introduced there and imperial contributions to the colony's budget were withdrawn. The first responsible ministry took office in New Zealand in 1856, but the course of constitutional progress in that colony differed from that elsewhere owing to the complications introduced by its semi-federal system of Provincial Councils.

Thus seventeen years had elapsed between Durham's enunciation of the principles of responsible government in his Report of 1839 and the widespread application of those principles to the colonies of settlement which was completed in 1856. No such thing as responsible government had been bestowed upon the colonies by name, and in fact such a bestowal was impossible, for there was no cut-and-dried institution that could be designated by that name. Nor was there any extortion of liberty from reluctant despots. It was a joint process of constitutional development in which both colonial and British statesmen played their part. The impulse for progress usually came from the colonies where the hampering control of old constitutional machinery was most severely felt, but it was almost universally recognised in Great Britain that progress was necessary, and if they could proceed with safety, the ministers and Parliament were willing to acquiesce in what the colonists desired. Thus they moved onward tentatively and cautiously to deal with each set of special circumstances as they arose, until in sum total a momentous but gradual revolution had been accomplished. In peace and without violence the seed beds had been prepared for that unceasing growth of colonial nationalism which was to be the most striking phenomenon of the rest of the century.

CHAPTER VI

RELATIONS WITH ABORIGINES—THE GREAT TREK, 1835-54

WHILE the other colonies of settlement were mainly concerned with their progress towards self-government Cape Colony had a more difficult line of development and presented different problems of government. It was the only colony of settlement which had to deal with large numbers of aborigines and it was there that Great Britain had to gain experience in relations with savages in a tribal stage. The Indians of British North America were few in number and far-removed from the areas of white settlement while in Australia the aborigines were so low in the scale of civilisation that the management of relations with them offered only minor problems. In South Africa on the other hand the native question overshadowed all else, for not only were there semi-civilised Hottentots scattered through the settlements, but on their eastern frontier there were restless hordes of Kaffirs against whose threatened invasions of the settlements constant guard had to be kept.

The British occupation of the Cape of Good Hope in 1795 and 1806 and its formal annexation at the Peace of 1815 were undertaken solely because the harbour of Cape Town was the most frequented half-way house on the route to India and in the possession of an enemy power would be a most dangerous base for action against our commerce. That strategic importance was still regarded in the late 'thirties as the main reason for its retention and there were men of influence who maintained that so long as Cape Town itself and the naval station at Simon's Bay were securely held, the affairs of the interior of Cape Colony were of slight importance. This opinion weakened, however, as there was a gradual influx of settlers of British descent into the colony after the peace and after the beginning of missionary enterprise among the Hottentots. We have already spoken of the Albany Settlement of 1820 as the first organised scheme of emigration to receive Government assistance, but we have not mentioned that the main reason for its support was the idea of establishing a buffer against

Kaffir invasions on the eastern frontier of Cape Colony. The results of the scheme were of great importance in its history for, for the first time, it brought in a considerable number of emigrants of British stock to join the original Dutch settlers who had been in South Africa since the latter part of the seventeenth century.

By the late 'thirties there was a large proportion of newcomers of English speech and traditions in Cape Colony most of whom were settled in the eastern part in what later became known as the Eastern Province. The Western Province was predominantly Dutch, though there were some English-speakers scattered through its country districts, and in Cape Town, the seat of government, there were many men of British descent belonging to the professional and mercantile classes and those who were engaged in the business of one of the most important ports of the outer empire. In the first few years after the British occupation the Imperial Government felt that the Dutch settlers might be allowed to go their own way undisturbed, but the immigration of the Albany colonists introduced a new factor to modify this view, for it was clear that they must be guaranteed protection and that to ensure orderly government new methods of administration must be introduced. Another factor of lasting importance came from the enthusiasm in Great Britain for the Christianisation and the welfare of the natives and this played a great part in the history of South Africa at the beginning of our period.

In the first century and a half after the Dutch settlement at the Cape in 1652 the Boers, as the up-country farmers of Dutch descent were called, only came into contact with weakly aborigines—the Bushmen, a puny race of slight importance, and Hottentots, cattle-rearing nomads whom the newcomers thrust out from their original grazing grounds and drove away into the more arid regions of the north. By the beginning of the nineteenth century the Hottentots who remained within the settled regions of the colony had almost all been subjected by the Boers to work for them as servants, but upon the frontiers of the settlements many still lived a tribal life, and although there was no organised warfare there was constant cattle-stealing and irritation between them and their white neighbours.

With the great outburst of missionary ardour in Great Britain in the first years of the century there arose plans for the evangelisa-

tion of these Hottentots, and missionaries were sent out, especially by the London Missionary Society, to preach to them and educate them in the arts of civilisation. Certain of the missionaries vigorously championed the rights of their coloured protégés and opposed the Boer farmers whom they accused of supporting slavery. In these acute disputes the Governors of Cape Colony generally tried to hold an even balance of justice between white and coloured people, but the missionaries went behind the officials and incessantly complained to their influential friends in England of Boer tyranny and injustice. The humanitarian group who were associated with the missionary societies raised so much outcry in Parliament and the press that in many cases they induced the Colonial Office to override the opinion of the Governor at the Cape and their pressure procured the formulation of Ordinances and regulations in favour of the Hottentots which were regarded with great distaste by the Dutch farmers. They felt that the authorities were dangerously sentimental in their attitude towards the natives, and when in 1828 the Government accepted a motion brought forward in the House of Commons by the humanitarian leader Thomas Fowell Buxton that directions should be given from Downing Street "for effectually securing to all the natives of South Africa the same freedom and protection as are enjoyed by other free persons residing at the Cape, whether they be English or Dutch," they were convinced that they were suffering grave injustice. If the "coloured people," as the Hottentots and half-breeds were called, were to be placed on an equal footing in all respects with the whites by the influence on a remote external authority of a few political missionaries, the Boers, they felt, were to be degraded to the level of their servants and a rankling sense of tyranny was aroused.

By the celebrated Fiftieth Ordinance which was promulgated in 1828 and confirmed in 1829, the competence of coloured people to purchase or possess land was confirmed, and they were allowed to move about freely without passes or hindrance into every part of the colony. The practice of apprenticeship by which the Boers had been accustomed to bind coloured children to service on their farms was, upon the prompting of the Anti-Slavery party in England, strictly regulated, and this gave rise to constant irritating interference by Government officials in the affairs of the country

districts which was resented especially by every Boer in the remote frontier regions.

Some of the coloured people who had been released from the pass-laws, which had restricted their freedom of movement, took to roaming the countryside, and the Boers complained that after 1830 there was a great increase of cattle-stealing and that the new freedom accorded to the Hottentots made life on scattered farms unsafe and led to incessant trouble with landless and indigent vagrants, while reliable farm servants could no longer be easily procured. In the irritating disputes that resulted, the natives could always find champions in the missionaries, who were ready to bombard the Colonial Office with petitions and complaints against the Boers for oppression and efforts to infringe the rights conferred upon the coloured people by the new Ordinance. The missionary "Institutions," or villages where they were striving to Christianise and train large numbers of Hottentots, were refuges for those who had fled from their old employers and centres of constant agitation against any return to the old restrictive conditions.

In 1834 the Legislative Council passed a Draft Vagrancy Law by which magistrates and officials might arrest any coloured persons found wandering without visible means of subsistence and "assign" them to labour, whether public or private, at their discretion. The missionaries attacked this law as reviving the evils of the old restrictive system, and they persuaded the new Governor, Sir Benjamin D'Urban, that the Vagrancy Law presaged a return to the old oppressive system, and with the sanction of Downing Street he disallowed it in 1835.

Meanwhile upon the eastern frontier of Cape Colony there was a more acute and pressing danger. While the white men had been pressing eastward with their cattle in search of fresh grazing grounds, there had been coming down from the north and east Bantu tribes of negroes of much greater vigour and military skill than the Hottentots. Like the white men, they were seeking pastures, and when the two opposing streams met about the beginning of the century in the country about the Great Fish River, there were serious clashes. The sporadic fights that went on over the disputes about cattle-stealing are usually called the "Kaffir Wars," but they mark rather a continuous and dangerous state of

tension prevailing throughout the frontier districts than a series of distinct periods of warfare. A very important consequence resulted from the presence of great masses of Kaffirs near the Great Fish River; the advance of Boer migration further eastward was checked and the stream instead moved northwards towards the passes over the mountains into the previously unoccupied *veld* of the interior.

For the prime mover in those avalanches of restless black humanity that were to differentiate the history of South Africa from that of all the other colonies of settlement for three-quarters of a century we must look far beyond the peaceful districts of the old colony round Cape Town. Away to the north-east in the region behind Port Natal there had grown up after 1817 the most dangerous and tyrannical native power that South Africa had ever known. There Chaka, a Bantu chieftain of extraordinary national ability, gathered round him an organised force of young men in regiments or *impis* and launched them against his neighbours with ruthless vigour. Armed with short, stabbing *assegais* they overcame all resistance by other tribes and drove them from their cattle pastures with terrible slaughter. Between 1817 and 1828 Chaka's devastations set the whole interior of eastern South Africa in a ferment, and hordes of homeless, land-hungry refugees poured against the borders of Cape Colony. Governor D'Urban was faced with the almost impossible task of defending the settled regions of the colony from constantly recurrent invasion, and he realised that that could not be accomplished by military measures alone, for the problem was certain to persist until the tribes immediately beyond the frontier could be brought into a stable condition. The force of regular British troops in the colony, upon whom he could alone depend, was far too small to patrol regularly the wild and scattered regions of the border, and yet the Treasury was always pressing him for a reduction in military expenditure. He was attracted therefore to the policy suggested by Dr. John Philip, the leading missionary in the colony, who had played a foremost part in the agitation on behalf of the Hottentots. Philip was well-known to the Colonial Office, and although he had often been at loggerheads with the Governors at the Cape, the Secretary of State was very willing to listen to his ideas as an expert in native affairs.

It will be remembered that in 1833 the humanitarians under the lead of Thomas Fowell Buxton had just won their crowning victory by the passage of the Act abolishing slavery throughout the British realms and their influence in the Colonial Office was at its height. Buxton was bent on following up his success by securing the appointment of a Committee of the House of Commons to examine the whole question of the treatment of aborigines throughout the Empire, and our relations with the native tribes in South Africa stood in the forefront of his agitation. The humanitarians, as we have seen, derived their evidence concerning South Africa from the missionary societies and especially from Dr. Philip, and Lord Glenelg, who was himself a strong supporter of the societies, was particularly ready to accept their suggestions as to policy.

After the part he had played in the recognition of the rights of the Hottentots and "coloured" people in Cape Colony in 1833 and 1834 D'Urban with the approval of the Colonial Office followed this up by making treaties with Andries Waterboer, the leader of the half-breed Griquas beyond the Orange, whereby they were granted arms and protection and made responsible for law and order in a sort of buffer state to protect the northern borders of the colony. He proposed to apply a similar policy to the more dangerous eastern frontier and in substitution for the old "commando system" of punitive raids across the border in reprisal for Kaffir cattle forays he desired to grant full recognition to the natives' title to certain disputed frontier lands and so to satisfy their need for cattle grazing. Through Buxton he represented to the Colonial Office that by means of treaties with the Kaffir tribes buffer states might be created along the border and so the chaotic conditions which kept the whole region in a state of ferment might be stabilised. But Philip did not realise how utterly devoid of organisation of any kind the jostling, land-hungry Kaffirs were and how much of the turmoil was due to the fact that thousands of them were crammed into a narrow region that was incapable of supporting them and their cattle.

However, Governor D'Urban received orders to establish a new frontier system on Philip's plan, but before he could take effective action, the pot of trouble boiled over. At the end of 1834 thousands of Kaffir raiders poured across the border and carried fire and looting over the whole of the frontier districts. Panic raged

in Grahamstown and as far as Cape Town itself, and the Governor, who rushed to the point of danger, was shocked at the devastation he saw on every side. He precipitately abandoned his intention of carrying out Philip's negrophile policy, and, raising commandos of Boer farmers under the old system to aid his force of regulars, he hastened to punish the invaders and prevent further incursions. He wrote to inform the Colonial Office that he was annexing a large tract of land beyond the old frontier to be called the Province of Queen Adelaide where he would settle certain of the Kaffirs on locations under British protection. This, he claimed, would move the actual frontier forward to a more defensible position and would guard against further incursions into the fully-settled regions of the colony. The project was a turning-point in the history of South Africa, for it meant that for the first time large numbers of negro savages were to be brought within the Empire, and the Cape Government was to become responsible for their order and good behaviour, as never before.

The news of D'Urban's intentions raised a terrific outburst of indignation from the missionaries, and they brought all the pressure they could upon Lord Glenelg to prove that the Kaffirs were suffering from flagrant injustice and that the annexation had been resolved upon not in the cause of peace but to satisfy the greed of land speculators who wished to seize for themselves the fertile tracts which were being stolen from their Kaffir owners. Glenelg, prompted by his humanitarian friends, lent a ready ear to these accusations, and in December 1835 he sent drastic and sharply worded orders to D'Urban that the new province was to be abandoned forthwith and the rights of the native chiefs to the lands fully recognised by freshly negotiated treaties.

The offensive terms that were publicly used by the British philanthropists concerning the colonists in their memorials and articles in the press and in their evidence before Buxton's Committee caused deep resentment in South Africa, where it was felt that the Colonial Office had taken precipitate action after listening only to biased evidence that was all on one side. The influence of "Exeter Hall," as the party of the philanthropists was called, was detested, because while claiming a monopoly of virtue its advocates never scrupled to use backstairs methods to persuade or compel the Colonial Office to take their evidence at its face value and to

reject the reports of the Government's own officials on the spot and the petitions of the colonists although they were faced with imminent danger. The resentment of the settlers of Dutch and English descent alike was entirely natural, for the missionaries and their supporters in Great Britain were quite uncritical in their negrophilism and they were unrestrained in the expression of their ideas.

The agitation of the time has left a permanent mark upon the history of colonisation, for it had an influence in two directions. It affected the course of events in South Africa, but it also led to the formulation of one of the earliest documents in which our modern policy in relation to dealings with primitive peoples is foreshadowed. Buxton raised the question repeatedly in Parliament and in 1835 he secured the appointment of a Committee of the House of Commons to consider the whole subject because of its importance both in South Africa and in regard to the Maoris of New Zealand who were then attracting much public attention. We have already referred to the part played by the Committee in the controversies over the annexation of New Zealand, but we must enter into more detail about its consideration of native policy in South Africa.

The Committee took evidence from many men who had had practical experience of native affairs, whether as missionaries like Dr. Philip or as colonial officials like Andries Stockenström who had had much frontier experience. Its Report was issued in June 1837, and in it the broad principles were laid down that ought to prevail in our treatment of aborigines. Since so large a part of the Committee's attention had been directed to recent happenings in South Africa, it may be safely asserted that the lessons from which those principles were derived had been largely founded upon the experience of missionaries and officials at the Cape.

The Report began with a reference to Britain's atonement for her long countenance of the great evils of the slave trade and slavery by her recent work for the abolition of the trade and by the sacrifice of twenty millions of money. 'Those were evils of long standing, but another evil very similar in character and in the amount of misery it produced was of comparatively recent origin and could plead no claim to indulgence by the sanction of the British legislature. This was the oppression of the natives of

barbarous countries which from the point of economy, of security, of commerce and of reputation was a short-sighted and disastrous policy and a burthen on the Empire. So far as it had been allowed to grow up imperceptibly, it had thrown impediments in the way of successful colonisation, had engendered wars in which great expenses had been necessarily incurred and had banished from our confines or exterminated the natives, who might have been profitable workmen, good customers and good neighbours. So far the report might command universal assent, but the Committee went on to characterise the enterprise of the colonial pioneers in words that caused deep offence. "These unhappy results," they wrote, "have arisen from ignorance, from the difficulty which distance interposes in checking the cupidity and punishing the crimes of that adventurous class of Europeans who lead the way in penetrating the territory of uncivilised man, and from the system of dealing with the rights of the natives." Only rigid control by the central power could put down these evils, and the Committee therefore desired that the nation should declare unmistakably that with all its desire to give encouragement to emigration, it would "tolerate no scheme which implied violence or fraud in taking possession of territory, that it will no longer subject itself to the guilt of conniving at oppression and that it will take upon itself the task of defending those who are too weak and too ignorant to defend themselves." They based these admirable resolutions not only upon motives of national interest but upon what they called "motives of a higher order which conduce to the same conclusion."

To modern ears the resounding sentences of the Report seem rather high-flown for a sober, Parliamentary blue-book, but they are worthy of recall as indicating the beliefs of leading men of the generation which saw greater progress in the Empire than ever before. "The British Empire has been signally blessed by Providence, and her eminence, her strength, her wealth, her prosperity, her intellectual, her moral and her religious advantages are so many reasons for peculiar obedience to the laws of Him who guides the destinies of nations. These were given for some higher purpose than commercial prosperity and military renown. . . . He who has made Great Britain what she is, will inquire at our hands how we have employed the influence He has lent to us in

our dealings with the untutored and defenceless savage; whether it has been engaged in seizing their lands, warring upon their people, and transplanting unknown disease and deeper degradation through the remote regions of the earth; or whether we have, as far as we have been able, informed their ignorance, and invited and afforded them the opportunity of becoming partakers of that civilisation, that innocent commerce, that knowledge and that faith with which it has pleased a gracious Providence to bless our own country."

The Committee went on to recommend that no exertion should be spared and no time lost in distinctly settling and declaring the principles which should henceforth guide and govern our intercourse with the vast multitudes of uncivilised men who might suffer or benefit by that intercourse, for they had found complete unanimity among the witnesses they had heard that much of the evil that had arisen in the colonies was due to the uncertainty and vacillation of our policy. The general principles they wished to see adopted were nine in number:

(1) The protection of natives should be considered as a duty peculiarly belonging and appropriate to the Executive Government as administered in Whitehall or by the Governors of the respective colonies. It was not a trust which could conveniently be confided to the local legislatures, for "the settlers in almost every Colony, having either disputes to adjust with the native tribes, or claims to urge against them, the legislature is virtually a party and therefore ought not to be the judge in such controversies."

(2) All contracts for service into which any of the Aborigines might enter with any of the colonists should be expressly limited in their duration and only made before a specially appointed officer so as to avoid "the growth of a servile relation into which the natives were formerly brought in some of our foreign possessions."

(3) The sale of ardent spirits to natives should be prohibited.

(4) The acquisition of the lands of the Aborigines by individual purchase or grant from their present proprietors should be declared illegal and void within the Queen's dominions or in immediate contiguity to them.

(5) The Governors of her Majesty's Colonies should be forbidden to acquire in her name any accession of territory either in

sovereignty or in property without the previous sanction of an Act of Parliament.

(6) The revenue of each colony should be charged for such sums as might be necessary to provide for the religious instruction and education of the survivors of the native tribes within that colony.

(7) A system of justice should be established whereby violation of British law by Aborigines should be punished, but "the utmost indulgence compatible with a due regard for the lives and properties of others, should be shown for their ignorance and prejudices."

(8) It was inexpedient that treaties should be frequently entered into between the local colonial Governments and the tribes in their vicinity, for compacts between parties negotiating on terms of such entire disparity were rather the preparatives and the apology for disputes than securities for peace. The safety and welfare of an uncivilised race required that their relations with their more cultivated neighbours should be diminished rather than multiplied.

(9) But an exception should be made in respect of the pastoral relation between Christian missionaries and the Aborigines. "To protect, assist and countenance these gratuitous and invaluable agents is amongst the most urgent duties of the Governors of our colonies. . . . But it may be observed that piety and zeal, though the most essential qualifications of a missionary to the Aborigines, are not the only endowments indispensable to the faithful discharge of his office: in such situations it is necessary that with plans of moral and religious improvement should be combined well-matured schemes for advancing the social and political improvement of the tribes."

The Report as a whole was the production of a time that is different from our own, and although the subsequent course of events often made its practical suggestions a dead letter, the actual formulation of the principles it laid down was of very great influence on the development of the Empire and especially so because thenceforward their application to particular cases was so constantly watched over and promoted by an influential group in British public life that they became ingrained in the policy of the nation as a whole.

Our examination of the Report of Buxton's Aborigines Committee for the evidence it affords as to the significant ideas of the

time has carried us away from the narrative of events in South Africa, and we must now return to take up that story again immediately after Glenelg's despatch to Governor D'Urban ordering the abandonment of his new "Province of Queen Adelaide" in December 1835. In tracing the events on the frontier where the vital South African problem of relations with the native tribes was engaging so great a share of the Governor's attention we have had to leave aside the questions that were agitating the white community in the more closely settled parts of Cape Colony. The government was carried on under an arrangement made in 1825 whereby the autocratic Governor was provided with an Advisory Council without any power of effectively criticising or guiding his actions. The absence of any representative system was felt as a serious grievance by the leading colonists, and when D'Urban assumed office in 1834 he was authorised to introduce a constitution similar to that in other colonies of settlement. The letters patent issued in 1833, which provided for this, were the work of the more liberal Government that had come into power in Great Britain after the Reform Act of 1832. The Governor was no longer to exercise despotic authority but was to be assisted by a nominated Executive Council and a Legislative Council of official and unofficial members and he was directed to submit his ordinances to debate in the Legislative Council, although he had the power to override its decisions. This measure provided the colony with what it had never had before, a forum for the open and orderly discussion of its political problems. The meetings were soon thrown open to the public and they were well attended and reported. Thus the unofficial members, who were in a majority, although they were nominated and not elected, could focus and lead public opinion in orderly fashion. Most people in the colony believed that it was not yet ripe for an elective legislature in view of the dangerous native problems, and the Cape had to wait twenty years before it received a full representative constitution such as Canada had possessed since 1791 and New South Wales since 1825. But the letters patent of 1833 were a real step forward along the lines of self-government and they marked some progress of the white South African community in the same direction as that of the other colonies of settlement.

All such changes, however, were completely overshadowed by

an event of outstanding importance in the history of South Africa and the Empire—the Great Trek, a more or less organised exodus from Cape Colony into the interior, which began soon after the close of 1835. As we have already noted, there were many things that had happened in the colony since the Anglicising reforms of 1828–34, which had greatly disturbed the minds of the Dutch-speaking settlers. In 1833–4 a further cause of discontent was added by the difficulties attending the emancipation of the slaves under the Act of 1833 and the payment of compensation. The abrupt orders from Downing Street for the abandonment of D'Urban's new frontier province increased the unrest, but in reality the main causes of the 'Trek lay much deeper and were more permanent in character and effect.

The Boers from the northern and eastern districts of the colony, who were in a majority among the trekkers, had never had many slaves and the defects in the slave compensation system did not appear fully until the 'Trek was under way. It was largely an economic and religious movement stimulated by political discontent owing to the increasing substitution of centralised control for the primitive local institutions of government to which the frontiersmen were accustomed. They knew by long experience that the authorities in Cape Town could be evaded by edging away from them, but it was becoming impossible to do this within the limits of the colony because most of the good land was already occupied and it was impossible to find areas in which to mark out the very large holdings which were necessary to carry on the somewhat primitive methods of cattle-rearing that the Boers employed. The negrophile activities of the missionaries and the way in which they were fostered by the Government offended against the harsh Calvinism of the farmers' pastors and made them the convinced promoters of an exodus. The earliest trekkers were adventurous wanderers by nature, but the main body included many of the best elements among the Boer population. Such men were moved simultaneously by a challenge to their fundamental traditions from three directions—the activity of the central government, the destruction of the old economic conditions and the new humanitarian zeal for the protection of the natives. Added together, they seemed to the Boers to undermine all they held dear, and it was to escape them that the trekkers determined to

move away, as the Puritan emigrants of the seventeenth century had fled across the Atlantic to avoid the despotism of Charles I.

Exploring parties were sent out from Cape Colony and when they reported in 1835 that it was to the north-east that the best lands were to be found, the preparations for the exodus were far advanced. The first small parties of *voor-trekkers* set out at the end of 1835 and crossing the Orange River they wandered north-eastwards in little groups of not more than fifty into the remote interior as far as the Limpopo. In February 1836 a larger body of sixty families set out under Hendrik Potgieter in more systematic fashion and by the end of the year the tide was running strongly, and as they came in groups of some hundred waggons or so to likely spots for settlement the trekkers established new communities with some primitive form of organised government. The actual events of the period belong to South African history and we need not attempt to trace out their tangled details here. We are only concerned with the main outlines of the results of the departure of some twelve thousand Boers from Cape Colony between 1836 and 1843 when the first stage of the movement came to an end. After that date there was a gradual trickle of individuals across the Orange to seek opportunities among those who had gone before, but the second stage of the movement affected the colony directly but little and was concerned with the gradual settling down of the trekkers in the interior. It came to an end in 1854 with the formal recognition by the British Government of two Boer republics, the Orange Free State between the Orange River and the Vaal, and the Transvaal further in the interior.

As the trekkers crossed the Orange towards the High Veld they came into conflict with the native tribes who were already occupying the coveted new lands, first the Griquas under Waterboer and Adam Kok, among whom there had already been much missionary activity, then the Basutos under the leadership of their chief, Moshesh, and beyond the Vaal the ferocious and warlike Matabele who were kin to the Zulus and like them were in a continual state of flux and carrying on savage raids against their less powerful neighbours. In 1837-8 the main stream of the trekkers, passing across the High Veld, came down through the passes of the Drakensberg Mountains into the lands behind Port Natal which

had been largely denuded of inhabitants by the devastations of the Zulus. There under the leadership of Piet Retief they desired to settle down, for the territory afforded good grazing and it had the inestimable value of an outlet to the sea through Port Natal. Although there were a few English adventurers on the coast trading fire-arms for ivory with the natives, there was no British control and it would be possible for the Boers to purchase the ammunition and the few manufactured articles they needed without being at the mercy of the merchants in Cape Town whom they considered grasping. They could get their supplies from American traders and whaling ships and they had hopes also of securing support and countenance from Holland and becoming really independent of Great Britain.

Deluded by a confident belief that they could secure a complete cession of the coveted territory, Piet Retief and a party of his followers visited Dingaan, the great chief of the Zulus, in the midst of his warriors and there after his disarming show of friendliness for a short time they were treacherously murdered. The savages then fell upon the main body of the trekkers and slaughtered many of them at Weenen, "the place of weeping," in the heart of Natal, but in December 1838 Andries Pretorius overwhelmingly defeated the Zulus at the Blood River and made it possible for the settlement to proceed without the ever-present fear of massacre. Every subsequent generation in South Africa has regarded Pretorius's victory as the turning point of the Great Trek and "Dingaan's Day" is annually celebrated.

The rudiments of a republican form of government were organised at Pietermaritzburg and a *Grondwet* or constitution for the Republic of Natal was drawn up which placed the government in the hands of a popularly elected Volksraad. In theory its authority extended not only over the trekkers in Natal, but also over those who had remained behind on the High Veld to form separate communities round Winburg and Potchefstroom. But those were the most irreconcilable and extreme among the trekkers, and in reality the leaders at Pietermaritzburg could exercise no effective control in the interior beyond the mountains.

The Trek faced the Governor of Cape Colony and the British Government with unprecedented and most difficult problems. They had not attempted to oppose the exodus by force, though

they had tried to dissuade individuals from joining the movement. Now that it had taken place and a new and would-be independent state had arisen in South Africa, what was to be the policy of the imperial Government towards it? The Natalians asked for recognition, and they might have secured it if it had not been for their adoption of a native policy which included all those items against which, as we saw earlier in this chapter, the humanitarians in England were unalterably opposed. The settlers in the eastern districts of Cape Colony, too, feared the effects of trekker interference and encroachment on the ever-restless Kaffir tribes in the regions beyond the frontier and these two influences combined to bring about after some hesitation a final refusal of the claim to Boer independence in Natal. The removal of the Zulu menace by Pretorius's victory had set free their many victims and thousands of natives poured down into the inland parts of Natal to find land. They could only be controlled by the Boers by very drastic regulations, and this led directly to the despatch of British troops to occupy Port Natal where they might be in readiness for the troubles that were expected in Kaffirland. It is unnecessary for us here to enter into the details of the story, for ultimately the annexation of Natal was decided upon for wider reasons than those in South Africa.

The appeals of the Natalians for recognition and help from Holland aroused the fears of the British Cabinet that French influence might be in the background and that the desire of Louis Philippe's ministers to acquire new colonial territory to the detriment of British interests was turning to South Africa. It was a similar fear to that which had promoted the occupation of Western Australia in 1829 and the annexation of New Zealand in 1840 only just in advance of French expeditions. The strategic position of Port Natal as a point where a hostile power might seriously menace our essential commerce with India gravely alarmed the Government and it was this above all that caused the Cabinet to order the occupation of the Port and to strengthen the military garrison at the Cape of Good Hope (1842). To make the position secure it was essential to control the Trekker Republic in Natal and prevent its having wide imperial interests. At the same time that a naval force was ordered to cruise off the port attempts were therefore made to secure the acquiescence of the Boer leaders in a formal

British annexation. Henry Cloete, a respected Dutch lawyer from Cape Town, was sent to Pietermaritzburg to effect a settlement of the outstanding difficulties, and, though the most intransigent trekkers from behind the Drakensberg Mountains strove to goad the Natal Republic to resist, ultimately its distracted leaders gave way and the Volksraad accepted the proffered terms, and Natal from the coast up to the mountains was formally proclaimed to be part of the British Empire (1843).

The Republican Government persisted for two years after its submission, and it was not until the end of 1845 and the arrival of a Lieutenant-Governor appointed by the Crown that the Natal Republic came to an end. The boundaries of the new colony were considerably restricted and large outlying areas were abandoned to the rule of the native chiefs. Natal was administered as a detached portion of Cape Colony under the general control of its Governor, and it was not until some years later that it received an influx of British immigrants who began sugar-planting and gave to the colony a different basis for its economic prosperity to that of the older white settlements in South Africa.

Meanwhile the Imperial Government was hesitating what course to adopt with regard to the "emigrant farmers" who had remained on the veld beyond the Orange River and the mountains. The region beyond the Orange to the north of the boundary of Cape Colony along the river was usually called Transorangia and there the trekkers were getting into serious difficulties with the natives and especially with the Basutos under Moshesh, who were advised by certain missionaries, partly Wesleyans and partly French Evangelicals. In 1843 the extremists among the Transorangian Boers tried to persuade their fellow-trekkers in Natal to resist annexation by the British Government, and when they failed began to establish an independent republic for themselves and to seize lands from the native tribes. This could not be regarded complacently by the Governor of Cape Colony, although he had strict orders from Downing Street not to extend imperial responsibilities north of the Orange. To preserve the peace, treaties were arranged with Moshesh and other native chiefs by which they were implicitly promised some measure of British protection and this was a step of great significance, for, for the first time it committed the Imperial Government to an interest in the affairs of the

interior which they had consistently refused ever since the Great Trek began.

When the Natal Republic came to an end the more uncompromising of the trekkers refused to remain under British sovereignty and in 1845-6 they trekked back by the way they had come over the mountain passes on to the High Veld and so across the Vaal into the remote interior. Boers from Transorangia who were discontented with British interference in that territory also fled northwards in small parties to join them, and by 1847 there were scattered and ill-organised Boer communities springing up in what came to be called the Transvaal.

Meanwhile a new and serious Kaffir war had broken out with the tribes on the eastern frontier of Cape Colony where the treaty system that had been established on Stockenström's advice had completely broken down. At the end of 1847 a new Governor of Cape Colony took office, who was to leave his mark deep on South African history. Sir Harry Smith was almost the last of the line of Wellington's Peninsular veterans, who had played so prominent a part in building-up the new empire. He had had much South African experience under D'Urban before he went to India to take part in the First Sikh War, and he was widely known as a man of great initiative and energy. He had wider powers than previous Governors, for he was also appointed as High Commissioner in South Africa to deal with matters beyond the borders of Cape Colony. One of the first acts of his governorship after clearing up the last embers of the Kaffir war was to try to persuade Pretorius and his followers to abandon their plans to trek from Natal, but, as we have seen, he failed to hold them back, and the renewed trek into the interior left him with a more tangled situation than ever in Transorangia.

He sounded the "emigrant farmers" who had passed beyond the Vaal as to whether they would still acknowledge the Queen's authority in their new homes. But before receiving their reply, he took the momentous step of formally annexing Transorangia and thus extending British sovereignty further north than it had ever gone before (February 1848). This was very serious, for it added greatly to the burden of British commitments in South Africa and pledged our support to the white settlers in Transorangia against the warlike native tribes who surrounded and jostled with them.

Sir Harry Smith was bitterly disappointed with the reception the Boer farmers gave to his action, for he had optimistically expected it to be favourable. But Pretorius, the trekker leader, did his best to persuade the malcontents to take up arms against the new régime and himself led a force of trekkers against the British detachment at Bloemfontein. They were repulsed at Boomplaats in August 1848, and this was the first clash in arms between the Boers and the Queen's forces.

By that date we may say that the Great Trek was over. Beyond the Vaal the trekkers had scattered over the veld as far north as the Zoutpansberg thus outlining the territory that became known as the Transvaal. Between the northern border of Cape Colony on the Orange and the Vaal River lay Transorangia with a mixed but scattered population partly of Afrikaner and partly of British descent but much outnumbered by blacks and with very uncertain boundaries to east and west where the white settlers impinged upon the Basutos and Bechuanas. Natal had lost almost all its Afrikaners and its remaining white settlers of British stock were enormously outnumbered by the negroes around and near them, partly organised in powerful confederacies like the Zulus and the Swazis, partly in weak fragments of tribes that had fled from the devastations of Chaka and his successors, but all alike in a state of primitive savagery. It was clear that henceforward one of the main preoccupations of the High Commissioner in South Africa would inevitably be the management of native affairs and the prospect was excessively distasteful to the Colonial Office and the Imperial Government. They were at the same time troubled with the Maori wars in New Zealand and thus a new era had unmistakably opened in the history of the Empire when the affairs of the colonies of settlement would no longer be dominant as they had been both in the old and the new empire.

The six years between 1848 and 1854 after Sir Harry Smith's annexation of Transorangia were fateful in the history of South Africa. The question that dominated them was whether British control exercised from the centre of government in Cape Town was to follow the trekkers into the remote interior with all that that involved in their protection against their native enemies, or whether they should be left to themselves to found independent republics as they passionately desired. The second alternative

would enable the Imperial Government to limit its expensive commitments, as successive Cabinets had persistently claimed was their intention, but it would involve the abandonment of all the schemes that the humanitarians and their missionary allies had planned for the civilisation and Christianisation of the blacks. But the influence of the humanitarians on colonial policy had greatly diminished as we have shown in earlier chapters, and the power of the Manchester School and the economic reformers over British public opinion and in Parliament was in the ascendant. They were determined to have as little as possible to do with colonial affairs, and it was this determination that had a decisive influence upon what the answer to the question of control or withdrawal was to be.

The detailed history of the six years before that answer was given need not concern us, important as it is in the story of South Africa, and it will be sufficient for our purpose to say something of the main outlines of the events and their results. After the War of the Axe the tribes beyond the eastern frontier of Cape Colony were left secure in their lands and under the rule of their chiefs in a separate imperial dependency known as British Kaffraria which was really a native reserve. They were, however, subject to the High Commissioner as "Great Chief" and were under the general control of resident magistrates and the chiefs were largely deprived of their authority according to tribal law. This seriously weakened the social system of the tribes and replaced it by the personal rule of white men which varied in its success according to the tact and common sense of those who wielded it. The system soon broke down and, when troubles broke out with the Basutos on the borders of Transorangia beyond the mountains, the tribes in British Kaffraria broke out into armed rebellion in sympathy (1850). Sir Harry Smith was thus faced with the most serious situation that had yet arisen in South Africa. The eastern frontier was in a flame, the Boers in what was called the Orange River Sovereignty were filled with unrest, and, to add to the troubles, many of the Hottentots in Cape Colony took up arms and joined the Kaffirs.

To cope with these dangers the Governor had been seriously weakened by the withdrawal of a portion of the British regulars under his command in compliance with the Imperial Government's policy of economy, and, since the Dutch burghers in the

Eastern Province would not obey his call to come out on commando against the Kaffirs, he had not sufficient force at hand to deal with all the troubles at once. The Imperial Government cared most about the Kaffir War and its great cost, but Sir Harry Smith saw that the Orange River Sovereignty was really the key to the South African problem and that, unless he could give to that troubled region a settled government, the discontented trekkers would achieve their end and break away from British control to found an independent state which would inevitably stir up war with the Basutos and the other warlike tribes on their borders. Earl Grey had at first accepted the annexation of the Orange River Sovereignty without hesitation, but as things got worse and the Governor could not win victory in the Kaffir War and had to call for reinforcements of imperial troops, he changed his mind. The Opposition in Parliament was vehemently attacking the Cabinet's South African policy and demanding a limitation of our responsibilities and at last Grey gave way. He determined to withdraw from the newly annexed Sovereignty and sent out two Assistant Commissioners "to settle and adjust the affairs of the eastern and north-eastern boundaries" of Cape Colony (1851). This practically meant that the Governor was to be superseded, but he had to acquiesce and sent off the Commissioners to do what they could to straighten up the Sovereignty. They found that the source of much of the trouble lay with the Boers of the Transvaal who were accused by the missionaries of interfering with the tribes on the undefined border of the Sovereignty with the object of blocking the "Missionaries' Road" to the north by which British access to the interior could alone be carried on.

But missionary and humanitarian influence on the Colonial Office and imperial policy was much less than it had been twenty years before, and Grey and the Cabinet were little disposed to listen to such representations. The Commissioners had no precise instructions but they were certain that the Imperial Government was resolved to curtail its responsibilities in South Africa and they thought that this could be done by securing an agreement with the Transvaalers to cease their interference with the affairs of the Sovereignty. At the beginning of 1852 the Commissioners met representatives of "the emigrant farmers beyond the Vaal" at the Sand River and drew up a Convention which

became one of the fundamental documents of South African history.

By this Sand River Convention (January 17th, 1852) and its acceptance by the Imperial Government the existence of a Boer state in the Transvaal was explicitly recognised and the trekkers had therefore achieved the end they had been striving for ever since they moved out from Cape Colony and later from Natal. The Government disclaimed all alliances with the tribes to the north of the Vaal River and both sides promised to abstain from encroaching upon each other's territories. For the first time an autonomous state was acknowledged to exist side by side with the British colonies in South Africa, and this was of fundamental importance in shaping the course of future events for the next half-century.

Meanwhile Sir Harry Smith was at last beating down resistance in the Kaffir War, and in his opinion this would set him free to deal with the Orange River Sovereignty. He deemed it the essential point in South African policy and we can now see that he was right. But the Cabinet in London was almost at the end of its tether, the Opposition aided by *The Times* and other important organs of public opinion were making their policy in South Africa the prime object of attack upon the Government, and Earl Grey had lost heart. Sir Harry Smith had been his trusted adviser, but he had completely lost faith in his assurances of ultimate success and just before the Ministry fell he consented to supersede him. George Cathcart, one of Wellington's commanders, was appointed to succeed to the Governorship and bring the Kaffir War to an end which the Cabinet regarded as the essential point. Smith's fall was greeted with exultation by the Opposition, and a little later the Ministry fell and Grey with it and the control of affairs passed to those who were determined to reduce our colonial commitments in every possible way.

The British public were sick and tired of the incessant expense and trouble of South African affairs and the new Derby Cabinet were resolved that, in the face of the dangerous situation in Europe caused by the accession of Napoleon III to power in France, Britain must tighten up her defences at home and withdraw her forces from dangerous and costly military adventures in distant

lands. It will be remembered that the fears of the average citizen were so acute that this very time saw the launch of the great Volunteer Movement to add to our military forces, and it was in this temper that a further withdrawal in South Africa was decided on. Governor Cathcart was unwilling to weaken his forces in the colony by sending up regiments into the interior to bring the Sovereignty to order, and his advice in favour of abandonment, though it was entirely based on military grounds, was decisive. The Duke of Newcastle, the Colonial Secretary in the new Aberdeen Cabinet, announced publicly in the spring of 1853 that it had been decided to withdraw to the south of the Orange River and he sent out a Special Commissioner, Sir George Clerk, to carry it out. But he told him that if public opinion in the Sovereignty were opposed to this momentous step, he might accede to the desire to maintain the Queen's sovereignty. Divisions in the Sovereignty were very acute although there was probably a majority in favour of the retention of the British connection. But Sir George Clerk would not listen. He pushed on the arrangements for withdrawal as hard as he could and finally in February 1854 he concluded a Convention with the representatives of the extreme particularists in the Sovereignty and furthered its acceptance by the gift of £50,000 for compensation for the losses of extruded officials. This was the policy of "scuttle" at its zenith, and the abandonment of those settlers who desired to remain within the Empire merits severe condemnation. But they could do nothing effective, the representations of the missionaries about the threat to our road to the interior fell on deaf ears, and the self-will of Liberal partisans in England had its way with fateful consequences for the future.

The Bloemfontein Convention (February 23rd, 1854) by which the Orange Free State came into being stands alongside the Sand River Convention of two years before as a fundamental constitutional document, but it was much more explicit. The Transvaalers had been assured of autonomy but not of independence, while the Orange Free State was recognised in full sovereignty and this led the Transvaal to aspire to a like status. In 1837 Great Britain was the only Power in South Africa with the single unitary government of Cape Colony; now there was certainly one (and arguably two) more to enter on a footing of equality into the disputes with the negro tribes, and thus the seeds of South African

disunion were sown that were to bear such bitter fruit during the next half century. The Great Trek had produced its dire results and the answer to the momentous question had been conclusively given for reasons far more attributable to the state of British party politics than for any valid South African reason.

CHAPTER VII

THE PACIFICATION OF INDIA, 1836-56

ALTHOUGH in many ways the work of Britain in India overshadowed in magnitude the rest of her imperial development and certainly left a deeper mark on the generation that was in its prime when Queen Victoria came to the throne, we have as yet said little of it in connection with the extension of British power beyond the seas. This is because the development of British policy in India lay quite apart from our policy in relation to the colonies of settlement and in our action concerning primitive aborigines. Yet it certainly had an incidental effect upon them, for many of the men who left the deepest mark upon the history of the Empire as colonial Governors had learned the business of government in India. Metcalfe in Canada and Sir Harry Smith in South Africa both had Indian experience, while Sir George Clerk, the Special Commissioner who forced through the policy of scuttle in the Orange Free State, had learned his rigid official methods as Governor of Bombay. Many of the principles of our imperial administration of the affairs of peoples of non-European stock were based on the experiments of our officials in India, where we had learned that the business of government was no theoretical affair to be worked out in the study but a constant adaptation of precedents to fit particular cases.

Before the Governor-Generalship of Lord William Bentinck (1828-36) the internal pacification of India had been completed up to the Sutlej and the wars were over. Bentinck was the first Governor-General who could devote the greater part of his attention to internal reform, but his successors were faced again for the next twenty years with serious political and military problems on their frontiers, and although this did not greatly impede the progress of the social and administrative reforms that Bentinck began it detracted attention from them and concentrated public interest in England as far as India was concerned on the wars beyond the frontier. Thus vast and deep-reaching movements proceeded almost unnoticed although they did more than anything before to

change what Englishmen too often thought of as the ancient and unchanging East.

Our main interest here will lie in those changes, but before we deal with them we must speak first of the organisation of Indian government at the beginning of our period and then of the principal events in the foreign policy of the Governors-General during the twenty years between the retirement of Bentinck (1836) and that of Dalhousie (1856). They saw the rule successively of Lord Auckland (1836-42), Lord Ellenborough (1842-44), Sir Henry Hardinge (1844-48) and Lord Dalhousie (1848-56), each period being marked by some special problem in foreign policy.

In 1837 the rule of British India was still nominally in the hands of the East India Company whose charter had been renewed once more in 1833. By that date it had ceased to be a trading corporation and the Board of Directors was simply a body administering an immense patronage. All the effective power over policy was in the hands of the President of the Board of Control (a body that had no corporate existence) who was really the Minister for Indian Affairs in the Cabinet. But he only interfered in matters of high policy, and in practice a very large amount of discretionary power was left to the Governor-General who was unfettered in his exercise of it. It is very fair, therefore, to speak of the policy of successive Governors-General as directing the course of Indian affairs, for they were really autocrats and there was nothing like it either in the United Kingdom or in the colonies.

The Governors of the Presidencies of Bombay and Madras also had a good deal of power in their own provinces though in matters of first-rate importance their policy was directed by the Governor-General. In fact throughout the whole of British India the personal factor in government was all-important. The actual burden of administration lay upon the shoulders of Commissioners and district officers and in their work they had a great deal of personal discretion, an arrangement that enabled them to adapt their measures to the infinitely diverse local circumstances covered by British rule. It was this flexibility of government according to a few fundamental principles of justice and order that made British paramountcy to be accepted not unwillingly by the vast majority of the Indian peoples. India had never before known such a period of peace and disinterested rule, and the foundations were

securely laid upon which a general rise in personal security and well-being could be based.

Turning to the foreign policy of the successive Governors-General we note that except the comparatively minor difficulties with Burma which had led to the annexation of the coast lands of that country (1826) just before our period begins, the whole interest of British policy beyond the frontiers was directed to the north-west. South and east of the Sutlej there was no longer any power that could dispute British paramountcy, but in the north-west our frontier was not co-extensive with our interests and between British India and Persia and Afghanistan, to preserve whose independence was our vital concern there lay the Sikh State of the Punjab which was a considerable military power.

The incessant preoccupation of the Imperial Government and of Lord Auckland as Governor-General was in the designs of Russia upon Persia and Afghanistan. The advance of Russia in Asia had been causing serious concern to British statesmen for some years and when in 1828 Russia inflicted a serious defeat on Persia this concern was greatly intensified. It was feared that Russia and Persia in unison were threatening Afghanistan where Dost Muhammad, the ruler in Kabul, had very ineffective control over the country. His position was challenged by Shah Shuja who had formerly been the ruler of Afghanistan and he strove to secure from British India help to advance his claims. Lord Auckland, acting on instructions from London, tried to counter Russian designs in Kabul but his negotiations failed, and in 1838 the British envoy left Kabul while Russian influence there increased and became more menacing. Auckland therefore decided to give assistance to Shah Shuja in alliance with Ranjit Singh, the skilful and much-feared ruler of the Punjab. With British military support Shah Shuja re-entered Kabul in 1839 but by then Ranjit Singh had died and the Sikhs in the Punjab had fallen into faction and disorder so that no help could be expected from that source. By 1841 the régime in Afghanistan had completely broken down and in the face of a serious revolt in Kabul the British forces were ordered to retire. Dost Muhammad was to be allowed to return to his throne, but before this had been accomplished an unprecedented disaster fell upon the retiring British forces. They were attacked on all sides as they marched back to the Afghan border

and the whole army was wiped out. Only a single English survivor of the force of 16,000 that had been the garrison of Kabul and its camp followers reached Jalalabad and safety. (January 1842.)

Just at that moment Lord Ellenborough arrived in India to succeed Lord Auckland, and it was clear that his first task would be to revise our Afghan policy, for the disaster to the retiring garrison from Kabul had united all Afghanistan against us. He decided that to restore British prestige some ostentatious exhibition of military power must be made and so General Pollock was sent to march to Kabul with a strong force and release the hostages who had been detained there. Pollock won several victories and entered Kabul despite all opposition, but then according to orders from Lord Ellenborough he withdrew leaving Dost Muhammad once more in precarious possession of the Amirate (1842).

Between British India and Afghanistan in the upper part of the Indus basin lay the Punjab, now falling deeper and deeper into anarchy between the warring Sikh factions, but to the south there lay Sind separated from the Punjab by large stretches of desert. The northern route to Afghanistan lay through the Khyber Pass between Peshawar and Jalalabad, which in view of the disorder in the Punjab was very dangerous. The more southerly route lay through the territory of Sind and in order to ensure our access to the passes thence into Afghanistan via Kandahar the ruling chiefs, who nominally owed allegiance to the Amir, were, in order to secure a passage for our armies, ordered to throw off this allegiance and accept the protection of the Company. After many disturbances and difficulties they ultimately refused and took up arms against the British forces. Sir Charles Napier defeated them in the battle of Miani (1843), and then, in compliance with Ellenborough's orders, proclaimed the annexation of the whole of Sind to British India. This considerable extension of our territory was very much criticised in England. It was impossible to denounce the annexation of Sind, but Ellenborough was thought to have been too adventurous in his policy and he was retired, Sir Henry Hardinge being appointed as his successor in the Governor-Generalship (1844).

Hardinge's first task was to deal with the difficult situation in the Punjab where control had fallen into the hands of the very bellicose Sikh army much to the distaste of the mass of the popula-

tion in which Muslims and Hindus considerably outnumbered the Sikhs. At the end of 1845 a large Sikh force crossed the frontier into British India and a hard-fought campaign began which was brought to a close by a decisive British victory at Sobraon in February 1846. Kashmir was separated from the Punjab and placed as a protected state under a Maharaja, while the Punjab itself was handed over to a Sikh ruler supported by a British force.

This arrangement soon proved a failure and the Sikhs in many parts of the Punjab rose in spasmodic revolts. They strove to throw off the control of the British Resident who practically governed the country. In 1848 Lord Dalhousie, who had just succeeded Hardinge, determined to effect the final pacification of the Punjab by decisive action. The Second Sikh War was fought with even more fierceness than the first, for the Sikhs are among the finest soldiers in India, but at last in February 1849 the climax was reached in the hard-fought battle of Gujrat in which the British army won a decisive victory. The whole of the Punjab was annexed to the territories of the Company and so the British border was carried from the Sutlej right up to the natural geographic frontier where the few roads lead up into the mountains which shut India off from Afghanistan and Central Asia. From the Khyber on the North-West frontier to Cape Comorin in the far distant south the whole of India had thus passed beneath the British sway, and the *Raj* could proceed in internal peace to carry out its task of giving order and good government to the vast populations of India.

Both in the provinces that were directly ruled and in the Native States whose dynasties carried on their government under the advice and guidance of British Residents there had to be incessant experiments and adaptations of old precedents to new needs before things would run smoothly. The task had begun under Warren Hastings sixty years before, but some of the most momentous decisions for the future life of India were made in the period that succeeded the renewal of the Company's charter in 1833. They were overshadowed in the public mind in England by the more spectacular events on the Indian frontiers but the principles laid down were the results of close discussion both in England and India among the same generation of statesmen who were respon-

sible for so much constructive work in other parts of the outer empire. Considerations of British party politics played no part in them, but they were reached after discussions in Parliament in which the best thinkers in each party took a share, and it may therefore be claimed that they were national in their inception.

The establishment of internal peace was a long and painful business involving unremitting efforts on the part of the administrative officers in the various provinces over many years, but it had to be accomplished before much substantial progress could be made. In the anarchical conditions into which India had fallen in the eighteenth century the people in the provinces had been the prey of organised gangs of robbers or dacoits who had now to be hunted down and their numbers diminished as the network of just and efficient administration was spread over the country. It was impossible to accomplish such a task by one organised effort from the centre ; it could only be done locally in each district by devoted and consistent effort of the officers of the Civil Service both British and Indian to whom the work of detailed administration was entrusted. By 1837 a great deal had been done and most parts of British India had been ensured a freedom from organised rapine such as they had never known before. The most spectacular accomplishment in this direction was the suppression of the bands of "thugs" who practised murder and robbery especially on the highways as religious duties to provide sacrificial victims for the bloodthirsty goddess they worshipped. By an Act of 1836 every member of a gang of thugs was made liable to imprisonment for life irrespective of a conviction for an actual murder, and by the drastic enforcement of this necessary Act the gangs were in the long run broken up and travellers could pass along the highways without fear of a cruel and sudden death.

From the beginning it was the settled principle of the Company not to interfere with the practices and beliefs of the many Indian creeds but to look impartially upon them all so long as they did not offend against public order. But where deep feelings were outraged by an anti-social practice the Company were prepared to take strong action. Such a practice was that of "suttee" or widow-burning which never was universal in India, but was followed by certain classes of Hindus as a religious rite in many provinces. Humanitarian sentiment in England was horrified by the tales of

such happenings and the Governors of the Company were moved to take uniform action against the practice of suttee throughout all British India. This was one of the earliest measures by which the Company treated India as a whole and not merely as a collection of separate provinces each with its own laws and customs. In 1830 the practice was prohibited by regulation simultaneously in all three Presidencies, Bengal, Bombay and Madras, and though an influential section of opinion appealed against this prohibition as contrary to our settled policy of non-interference with Indian customs and institutions it was upheld and enforced with the approbation of large sections of reforming Hindu opinion.

In their agitation for abolition the humanitarians had often directed their attention to the existence of slavery in British India, but even the most extreme abolitionists realised that circumstances there differed widely from those in the sugar colonies in the West Indies. There was little or no plantation slavery but the abolitionists in their hatred of the institution were determined to make even domestic slavery illegal. The Charter Act of 1833 was passed in the same session as the Abolition Act and included in it was the provision that the Company must take action as soon as it should be safe and practicable. Enquiries as to the character of slavery in the various parts of India took a long time and it was not until ten years later that the Government of India Act of 1843 was passed by which the courts of law were forbidden to recognise any legal right to the possession of a slave. There was no sudden or spectacular measure of emancipation such as had taken place elsewhere, but this outlawing of slavery gradually led to its disappearance so that within twenty years there were no slaves left in British India.

Down to the Charter Act of 1833 the three Presidencies had been quite separate in their powers of legislation and their measures, known as Regulations, differed widely. There was no general code of laws for the whole of British India before that date, but by the Act this anomaly was removed, the separate Presidencies were deprived of their independence and the legislative power in matters of broad principle was placed in the hands of the Governor-General in Council whose Acts were to have force throughout the whole of British India. This was a step of the greatest importance, for it began the unification of the Government of India in a way that had never been seen before. The first Legal

Member of the Governor-General's Council was Thomas Babington Macaulay (afterwards Lord Macaulay, the celebrated historian) and under his able lead the preparation of a code of laws was begun that within the next twenty-five years cleared up the tangle of conflicting customary law and practice which was a most serious obstacle to orderly progress. There was no wholesale displacement of custom or legal practice by Western ideas, but by the devoted labours of successive legal members the essential elements of Indian law, both Hindu and Muslim, were woven together into a connected whole and British India passed under the Rule of Law, administered fairly and wisely and no longer subject to the personal caprices or self-interest of rulers and judges.

Before this reform took place, however, there had been a gradual completion of the task upon which British administrators had been engaged ever since the time of Warren Hastings sixty years before. This was the stabilisation and regularisation of the rights of individuals and communities in the villages and country districts in which the enormous majority of India's teeming millions dwell. Before the coming of British administration there was no certainty as to what those customary rights were. A good and far-seeing ruler would respect them as far as they could be ascertained by personal negotiation between him or his officials and the peasant cultivators or landowners. But at any moment he might be succeeded by a grasping and rapacious ruler who would disregard the rights of his subjects to seize an immediate advantage. The whole basis of organised society was therefore uncertain, and only when the State which did not die and could not be displaced was brought into individual contact with persons or communities could that uncertainty be removed. By the patient investigations of successive district officials over many years rights were placed on record from end to end of the provinces of British India. Society was thus placed upon firm and accepted foundations and together the record of rights and the codification of laws brought India under the rule of law as had never been the case before. This is one of the most profound and fundamental achievements of Britain in India, and she alone could have bestowed it, for her Governors alone had the power to make their decisions respected. It was pacification in the highest sense and it was accomplished not by military conquest but by patient,

tolerant and consistent government generation after generation.

To carry on the detailed administration of vast and immensely populous territories solely through men of European stock was manifestly and utterly impossible, and from the days of Warren Hastings onwards the problem of finding educated and trustworthy Indian officials to carry out the policy decided on by the Company was a constant matter of concern. The number of Englishmen employed in the government was very small as compared with the millions of the population even if the whole of the Europeans in the Company's service were included. Hastings and his immediate successors made the standards of the Civil Service very high and the employees of the Company were very different in integrity and ability from the commercial servants they had employed before Hastings' days. The officers in charge of districts had to be men of great administrative competence and judgment to wield the large powers that lay in their hands, but they were still known by the insignificant title of "Collector" which dated from the early days of the Company's territorial rule when their duties had been mainly concerned with the collection of revenue. The junior British officials long continued to be known as "writers" of the East India Company though they had ceased to be mere commercial clerks as they had been in the old days of the Company.

Under the Charter Act of 1813 the Company recognised that it was a part of its duty to aid the higher education of the classes in India from which it drew recruits for the public service. Hastings had begun to further this purpose by his foundation of a college or Madrasa in Calcutta for the furtherance of Islamic studies, of which the most important was Persian, the language in which the principal business of the Government was conducted as it had been in the days of the Moguls. But English was gradually becoming better known among Indians of the educated classes and there was considerable division of opinion as to whether it would not be well to make the English language and studies carried on through the medium of English the essential of a new educational system aided by the State. Some dreaded this, while others wished to build up learning on Oriental foundations and to preserve Persian as the medium of instructions. This meant that education would be likely to have a Muslim bias and to this Hindu opinion

was opposed, for the old Hindu learning had been based on the ancient religious texts in Sanskrit. Macaulay's influence was decisive when he arrived in India in 1835 and the momentous decision was taken to make English the medium of higher education in India and to give a Western bias to the whole of the educational system in the colleges to be founded. In 1837 Persian was replaced by English in the courts and the higher business of government, and so the process began which was to do more than any other single cause to give a unified basis of thought in secular matters to India from one end to another. English gradually became the second language of every educated Indian and he became in most cases more familiar with Western thought and ideas in secular matters than with ancient Indian thought which always had a religious trend. It was undoubtedly by these fundamental intellectual causes that India was set on its course of modern development.

Side by side with them there were material and economic causes at work, but it was not until Dalhousie's Governor-Generalship (1848-56) that the new trends of economic movement became clearly apparent. Before that period it may be said that the influence on India of Britain's economic development had been more destructive than constructive. The introduction of cheap machine-made cottons and other goods had done much to destroy the old hand-made products of Indian industry and driven their workers from the towns into the villages to make a scanty subsistence from agriculture. The great cosmopolitan ports which were the Presidency capitals, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras, grew and flourished, but most other Indian cities tended to decay and India became more than ever a producer of primary products as the basis of her economic system. The introduction of new cultivations like that of tea, which began in the 'thirties, or the expansion of old, like oil-seeds for export to European markets, affected the prosperity only of certain districts, and in many parts of India the first third of the nineteenth century was a time of stagnation in agriculture and agricultural methods, which remained primitive and unprogressive.

We have had so far little or nothing to say about the communications between Britain and the outer parts of the Empire because during the sailing ship era they changed little and their influence

upon the development of the colonies was overshadowed by other causes. The rate of transport was slow and this necessarily left much of the responsibility for decision in cases of emergency upon the colonial Governors, but the communications between the authorities in London and India had to be much more frequent and the need for expeditious transit was increasingly felt when fundamental decisions upon Indian policy which might vitally affect our relations with other Powers demanded repeated consultation between the Cabinet and the Governor-General.

The main route to the East by which all the goods and most of the passengers and mails were conveyed was by sea round the Cape of Good Hope, but even the fastest East Indiamen took many weeks on the passage and it might be several months before a reply could be received in India to a despatch sent to London by that route. The alternative was the ancient overland route through Egypt or Syria and Mesopotamia, and as early as 1770 many important despatches were sent by that route.

British policy after the settlement of 1815 became vitally concerned with the safety of the route and our interests were therefore closely linked with all the territories that lay along it from Gibraltar and Malta in the west through Cairo, Suez and Aden, or Aleppo, Damascus and the Persian Gulf to Bombay in the east. The first steamship on the route joined Bombay through the Red Sea to Suez in 1830 and the mails it carried reached London in fifty-nine days instead of the customary eighty. The Government tried the Syrian alternative by placing two steamers on the Euphrates in 1836, but the experiment was not a success owing to the unhealthiness of the region and the uncertainties of navigation on a river blocked by shifting sandbanks. Attention was therefore concentrated on the Egyptian route, and in 1840 the Peninsular and Oriental Company under government contract began to run regular steamship services to Alexandria and from Suez to Bombay. In 1839 to protect the route the port of Karachi was acquired by cession from Sind so as to command the mouths of the Indus, and Aden was occupied as a coaling station at the entrance to the Red Sea in the same year. With the coming of steamships such coaling stations were essential for the replenishment of their bunkers at frequent intervals on the voyage, and new services of British colliers had to be organised to supply their dumps. The first

regular mail service by the overland route through Egypt began in 1838 and Bombay was brought within six weeks of London. By the beginning of Dalhousie's Governor-Generalship mails were despatched regularly in each direction at monthly intervals and soon after he left India the service was run weekly as it has continued ever since. Its cost was so high, however, owing to the expenses of transshipment in Egypt that it could only be used for mails and passengers, and all goods continued to be sent by the longer sea-route *via* the Cape.

Dalhousie's period of office marks an epoch in the economic development of India and his great achievements were based upon the principle of improving the welfare of the peasants rather than devoting attention mainly to the interests of their rulers or of the merchants who were concerned with India's external trade. He believed that, if the well-being of the masses were improved, benefits to trade would inevitably be bound up with it, and events abundantly proved that he was right. His first object was to improve communications and thus to reduce the lack of contact between the Indian provinces. Down to 1830 Bombay was completely isolated on the landward side and all its communications with the rest of India were carried on by sea. In that year, however, a good road was made over the escarpment of the Western Ghats and this brought about the opening-up of new markets for the produce of the interior. Owing to their isolation from one another great areas in which their crops had failed were subject to famines which could not be relieved by the transport of foodstuffs from more fortunate regions. As late as 1838 there was usually famine in some part of India or another and hundreds of thousands perished annually of starvation as their ancestors had done for ages. The introduction of metalled roads linking up the provinces made possible not only the easier transport of produce to the ports but also the supply of food during times of famine, while the improvement of the conditions of navigation on the great rivers to which Dalhousie and his successors devoted much attention aided in this progress.

Dalhousie's best remembered service in this direction was the introduction of railways. It was not until the later 'thirties that railways began to replace roads as the principal means of communication in England, but as early as 1843 British capitalists began to

plan railway enterprises in India and it fell to Dalhousie to lay down certain principles to avoid the unlicensed competition and speculation between rival interests which had marred the opening of the railway age in England. He insisted that the construction of railways in India must be planned under the supervision of the State and that they must be designed to serve the interests of India as a whole and not allowed to grow up haphazard wherever there seemed to be an opportunity of securing quick profits for British financiers. He was able to come to terms with the Companies that desired to undertake the work, and so construction was begun of the great trunk lines on an orderly and correlated plan. Before he left India the outlines of the main system of communication had been laid down ; immense quantities of railway material were imported from Britain and an access of prosperity was brought to the factories that made it, the shipping companies that carried it and the Indian labourers who built the lines. It became possible for cultivators in the interior to find markets for new supplies of their produce, and for Indian merchants and bankers with British assistance to organise commerce on a scale that was infinitely wider than had been possible while the provinces were isolated and had no means of rapid inter-communication.

The railways aided in the conquest of famine as the roads had done, but on a much wider scale. The beneficent influence of the State was employed, too, in another direction to relieve large areas from the ravages of drought and the consequent failure of the crops and resultant famine. This was by the organisation and carrying-out under British engineers of great irrigation schemes. In Northern India the system of irrigation from the Jumna had fallen into ruin during the anarchy of the eighteenth century and immense areas had sunk from fertility to the conditions of an unpopulated desert. The 'thirties saw the restoration of the irrigation works and by the construction of the carefully designed Ganges Canal which was begun in 1842 the waters of both Ganges and Jumna were distributed over the whole region between the two rivers, and where there had before been nothing but an arid waste there came in a new population of industrious cultivators to produce abundant crops and bring new wealth to the community. Similarly old works were restored and new ones constructed in Southern India during the 'thirties and 'forties. The State

benefited by the return on the capital invested and the increased yield of taxes, while the people were rescued from this precarious existence on or below the bare margin of subsistence. The beneficent result of improvements such as these was undeniable, and it looked as though the twenty years between 1837 and 1856 were wholly to the good. That such was not the case and that there were many defects in the system of British rule in India was unfortunately to be proved immediately after Dalhousie's departure, as we shall show in a later chapter.

CHAPTER VIII

COLONIAL TRADE AND THE NEW COMMERCIAL POLICY, 1837-55

IN what we have said about the pacification of India the East India Company only appeared as an institution of government. Its commercial interests had dwindled and the stages by which it lost its old monopoly of trade with the whole of the regions to the east of the Cape of Good Hope were landmarks in the conversion of Great Britain from a country of high Protection and a fierce economic nationalism into one that was free from all restrictive commercial regulations and believed in open competition for traders of all nations without any governmental interference.

The monopoly of East Indian trade which the Company had held ever since its foundation in 1600 was relinquished when its Charter was renewed in 1813, and the trade to India was thrown open to any British merchant or shipowner who chose to engage in it. This was really only the legalisation of existing practice, for it had long been growing impossible to enforce the monopoly against interlopers and the greater part of the trade had passed into their hands and those of the Company's servants who traded on their own account. As soon as it ceased to hold the monopoly the East India Company ceased to trade in India and concentrated its commercial efforts on the trade to China especially in tea, of which it retained a monopoly down to 1833. When that was abolished on the renewal of the Charter for the last time, the East India Company relinquished all its commercial activities and remained simply as an intermediary for certain purposes between the Crown and the Government of India.

The Company had been engaged in building up its trade with China ever since the middle of the eighteenth century and to provide intermediate stations on the route through the Straits of Malacca it had acquired by purchase from the local Malay sultans the island of Penang in 1786 and Singapore in 1819. By 1837 the latter settlement had become very important as the centre from

which a growing community of Chinese merchants carried on an active trade with many parts of Malaya and the East Indian Archipelago. The centre of the China trade was at Canton where the European merchants had forced their way in despite the reluctance of the Chinese Government to allow their subjects to trade with them. There was an immense amount of smuggling in contravention of all regulations and the most important article imported in exchange for the tea, which the European merchants purchased, was opium, the introduction of which into China was absolutely forbidden though without effect. The opium came from India where the cultivation of the poppy was a vast industry on which the prosperity of certain of the Indian provinces was largely based. The smuggling of opium was carried on almost openly with the connivance of the local Chinese mandarins who derived large profits from it. While the East India Company had the monopoly down to 1833 some sort of order was preserved in the trade round Canton, but when the monopoly came to an end, trading conditions fell into chaos and an open breach with the central Chinese Government was inevitable.

The European traders at Canton were subjected to cruel indignities by the new Governors who had been appointed to suppress the opium trade and, despite the efforts of the British officials who were sent to China to set matters on a better footing, no redress could be obtained. In 1840 war was declared to enforce this redress and an expedition was sent against Canton. The city fell into British hands, and in 1842 the Chinese were compelled to agree to a treaty by which Amoy, Shanghai and other ports were thrown open to foreign trade and the island of Hong Kong was ceded to Great Britain. British trading activities were centred there instead of at Canton and the new colony soon became one of the most active commercial centres in the China Seas. Under the orderly conditions of British government Chinese merchants flocked in to engage in trade and the new capital which was built at Victoria became the home of a busy Chinese population. The trade was now freed from all restrictions and Hong Kong as a free port rapidly rose to prosperity as the furthest British outpost on the long commercial route *via* India to the Far East. The whole of the commerce along that route was closely interconnected, and her Asiatic trade to India, Singapore and China became one of the

most important channels through which wealth poured into the pockets of British merchants and manufacturers.

The victory of the free-traders in securing the opening of the trade to India in 1813 was followed up under the statesmanlike lead of William Huskisson during the next few years to a complete revision of our hopelessly complicated customs system that had come down without any comprehensive reform from the old restrictive mercantile empire of the eighteenth century. By his carefully-planned reforms the old Navigation Laws were amended and almost all restrictions on colonial trade were removed so that all British shipping, home and colonial alike, could trade where and how it would. The old system of preferences on imperial trade was revised and made to fit new circumstances. Differential duties were charged on goods entering the home market, so that while foreign goods paid the full duties that were charged at a lower rate than before, goods of colonial origin received an imperial preference, and similarly British goods imported by the colonies had a preference over foreign goods. Step by step, however, our merchants were converted to the abandonment of even these slight measures of protection and by 1837 they had become overwhelmingly advocates of complete freedom of trade for all to every part of the Empire and to all foreign countries that would reciprocate.

Though the overseas Empire both in India and the colonies increased so greatly both in area and population during the next twenty years, that increase was negligible as compared with the growth of British markets elsewhere. The continent of Europe was beginning to build its railway systems with the aid of British capital and British engineers and the new freedom of communication helped most countries to rise in prosperity, so that there was an increased demand for British manufactures. The Middle West of America was peopled at an unprecedented rate by Irish and British emigrants carried across the Atlantic in British ships and along railways built with British capital supplied necessarily in the form of manufactured goods. The countries of South and Central America awoke from their long sleep when they had secured their independence and they, too, were almost insatiable in their demands for capital goods. Compared with these great foreign demands colonial markets were comparatively negligible. We had

few or no foreign competitors and so the imperial preferences were of little importance. The commercial classes ceased to think imperially, and by 1850 the wheel had come full circle from the self-sufficing ideals of the old mercantilists to the views of the extremer theorists of the Manchester School who regarded British control in a colonial territory as a nuisance because it might bring with it uncompetitive humanitarian ideas.

However, such extreme views were only confined to a vocal section of the radical supporters of the Whig party and generally speaking the mass of public opinion throughout the country became converted to free trade views by practical experience of the benefits derived from the removal of out-of-date restrictions. Some of the products of the colonies were widely developed just at the moment when British mills and factories were crying out for raw materials to keep their machines busy. Those machines were driven by British coal, but to work its seams the mines must have pit props which the English forests could no longer supply. The lumber of the Canadian forests seemed inexhaustible and, as they were cut, ground was cleared for the growing of Canadian wheat to feed the increasing population of the British industrial centres. Australian wool by 1840 was fetching better prices on the market than the best fleeces of European flocks, and the demand for the cloth that was woven from it rose with the standard of living of our people both at home and in the colonies.

New needs, too, had to be supplied from new sources which were often colonial. Machinery demanded supplies of the lubricating oils which were never needed before the coming of the steam engine. For the railways the palm oil of the British West African settlements would suffice, but fast moving looms needed a finer oil and so the whaling industry flourished by the pursuit of the sperm whale and British traders were carried by our whale ships into the remote island groups of the Pacific which would never otherwise have been visited. In these and in numberless other commodities the demand produced the supply, the circumference furnished the raw materials to the centre and drew from it manufactures in return, not only up to the value of what had been supplied, but more still in public loans. These were spoken of as money, but they were of course supplies of goods for the development of virgin territory.

The expansion of British rule into the undeveloped regions behind the colonies of settlement was in the first place dependent on the incoming of new population and we have therefore so far dealt with its history in connection with emigration and the development of governmental institutions. But the concurrent extension of our activities in other parts of the world which were the home of vast non-European populations was on the other hand entirely based upon the development of trade and must be traced in connection with that wider story. In no instance was territory acquired for the Empire in pursuit of glory or with the desire to bring new lands under the British flag. In some cases new posts might be occupied for strategic aims, but the history of the dependencies in the middle part of the nineteenth century was predominantly an economic matter and our treatment of them therefore falls appropriately into this chapter. They were the colonies in the West Indies and the settlements in West Africa.

Only the West Indies with their dependence on a single commodity, sugar, fell back while the prosperity of all the other parts of the Empire increased. We have spoken in an earlier chapter of the vicious social economy that had grown up in the Sugar Islands during two centuries and the breaking away from it by slave emancipation. Here we are not concerned with its social or political, but only its economic effects. To have listened to the supporters of the West Indian interest at the height of the struggle one would have supposed that the industry was highly profitable while it could obtain supplies of slave labour, but in reality this was not the case and the complaints of the planters and their pleas for government help were incessant. The industry was wastefully carried on by the large majority of the planters and, as they were always labouring under a great burden of debt to their merchants in London, they were quite incapable of weathering any economic crisis. Of course, such a crisis had come with emancipation just before our period begins.

The old plantation economy was broken to pieces, a large part of the population refused to work more than for a mere subsistence and insoluble social problems arose. The landowners complained that not merely had they been deprived of the labour necessary to till their plantations, but that Great Britain had done away

with the preferential duties which favoured West Indian sugar in her markets and admitted slave-grown sugar from Cuba and Brazil at the same rate as that from our own colonies. The dispute over the matter filled a considerable part of the time devoted to debates on colonial affairs in Parliament during the 'forties, and they were carried on with much bitterness and many complaints against the free traders of a lack of imperial loyalty.

They led nowhere, however, for the causes of West Indian distress lay too deep to be cured by differential duties.

The remedy was to introduce fresh supplies of dependable and efficient labour to replace the negroes who had left the plantations to support themselves idly but contentedly on a bare margin of subsistence by scratching small plots of land around their huts. The importation of coolies under indentures from the East Indies began in the late 'forties and British Guiana, Trinidad and Jamaica took them in considerable numbers. The authorities in India insisted on careful precautions to prevent exploitation of the coolies and they were of course aided by the Anti-Slavery Society. The planters found the new supply of labour costly but efficient, and this was the first glimmer of relief in the desperate situation into which the West Indies had collapsed. The coolies, too, found their new homes congenial, and a large proportion of them, when their indentures had come to an end, did not avail themselves of the free return passages to India to which they were entitled. They settled down in the West Indies and came to form a stable and prosperous element in the population of certain colonies notably British Guiana and Trinidad.

When indentured Indian coolie labour was being introduced and difficulties were being placed in the way by the Indian Government for humanitarian reasons, some attempts were made to bring in Chinese coolies to relieve the labour shortage. The coolie from the provinces of Southern China is a hard worker and very frugal, but the West Indian planters preferred Indian labourers and so the numbers of Chinese immigrants were never so large. However, those who came in settled down regularly and made their permanent homes in the colonies they entered, thus adding another and unassimilable element to the mixture of non-European races in those old British dependencies. The number of pure white inhabitants progressively dwindled as the West Indian

colonies fell deeper and deeper into distress and men of mixed white and negro blood replaced the old white planters and merchants who had carried on the business of the islands.

We spoke earlier in this chapter of the introduction of new articles into imperial commerce, and among them we mentioned palm oil, a product of West Africa. During the period under review the exports of palm oil greatly increased and the trade became very important to West Africa. Before we say more of it, however, we must trace in outline something of the history of the British West African settlements during the period. Britain had had forts and factories upon the Gold Coast ever since the seventeenth century, the chief of which was Cape Coast Castle, but she had no territorial sovereignty. The factories were only collecting points for the slaves who during the eighteenth century formed the only profitable article of trade from West Africa. The posts or "settlements," as they were called, though they had no white settlers in the sense in which that phrase is used concerning the colonies of settlement, were built upon land leased from the native coast chiefs, and the white men who were engaged in trade there were merely middlemen existing upon the sufferance of the negro slave traders.

There was never a successful monopoly of the West African trade as there was in the East Indies and all the successive Companies that tried to establish it were disastrous failures. The last of them, the Royal Africa Company, was abolished in 1750 and the trade was thrown open to any merchant who chose to engage in it by paying a merely nominal subscription to the Company of Merchants trading to Africa, which was merely an organisation for maintaining a few forts. Even that was dissolved in 1821 and the Colonial Office took over the task of supervising the West African settlements, though with little or no success. The humanitarians under the lead of Zachary Macaulay believed that, if the slave trade could be abolished, it would be possible to build up a profitable legitimate commerce with the interior of Africa and in pursuance of this design in 1787 they established a Sierra Leone Company for the founding of a colony of free men round the best harbour on the West African coast. Their plans failed, the Company lost all the capital it had expended, and Sierra Leone had to be taken over by the Crown. By the 'thirties it had become the nominal

centre of government in the British settlements in West Africa including both the newly established post at Bathurst on the Gambia and the scattered settlements on the Gold Coast. In reality, the control of the Governor of Sierra Leone over the outlying posts was very slight and ineffective and the traders had to carry on as best they could against the exactions of the local negro chiefs.

A far greater danger threatened them from the rising military power of the Ashantis of the interior, and in 1824 a serious disaster befell when Sir Charles Macarthy and a mixed force of British and friendly negroes was overwhelmed and butchered by Ashanti invaders from Kumasi. The disaster was not retrieved till 1826 when the Ashantis were defeated at Sadowa, and it was then seriously considered whether we should not withdraw from the whole of the Gold Coast settlements and merely carry on our trade from visiting ships as our merchants did in most parts of West Africa, where there was no vestige of European authority. One party among the African merchants and many influential members of the Government desired the abandonment in order to reduce expense and limit our responsibilities, but it was opposed by others, and finally it was decided to hand back the management of the Gold Coast settlements to a Committee representing the merchants interested in the trade there, the Government only being responsible for a small grant-in-aid provided by Parliament. But among all the branches of empire trade the enterprises of the African merchants attracted more hostile critics than any other and in 1839 a new Society for the Civilisation of Africa was formed to establish legitimate commerce especially in cotton and palm oil upon the Lower Niger which had recently been explored.

Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, as we saw in an earlier chapter, had in his Aborigines Committee set out the humanitarian principles that should govern our relations with native tribes and now in alliance with the leaders of the Church Missionary Society he pressed forward a scheme for a great new expedition to open up trade on new lines. His book *The African Slave Trade and the Remedy* excited great public interest just when the attacks upon the Committee's administration on the Gold Coast and the scandals connected with the government of Sierra Leone were at their height. Public subscriptions were readily obtained and in

1841 the Niger expedition set forth with instructions from the Colonial Office to open up new channels of trade but a direct prohibition of acquiring new territory. Unfortunately the expedition met with disaster within a few months after its arrival in Africa, and in 1842 when the news reached England it caused a complete revulsion against African adventures and a movement to secure withdrawal from all commitments on the West Coast.

The Select Committee of the House of Commons which examined all the evidence at their disposal in 1842 were definitely of the opinion that the system of shirking governmental responsibility by delegating it to the Committee of Merchants like a firm of army contractors must be done away with. Their only interests lay in making profits and the African merchants made little objection to the assumption by the Crown of direct rule again in 1850, because they wanted to be rid of all governmental interference and they found that their trade did quite as well or better in territory without any settled British government as under the shadow of one of the forts. One able and persistent merchant, Macgregor Laird, succeeded without government assistance in establishing a profitable trade especially in palm oil in the region known as the Oil Rivers in the delta of the Niger, and others followed his example. By the middle of the century the annual imports of palm oil were rapidly increasing and they were paid for by the exports of British manufactures which passed up by the Lower Niger for wide distribution by native middlemen throughout the interior. The victory of such free trade methods without government interference or protection went far to confirm the mercantile community in the belief that commerce flourished best without the expensive extension of sovereignty and it appears that this African experience was an influential factor in consolidating faith in free trade doctrines in the England of the 'fifties. Trade at that period certainly did not "follow the flag." We shall see in a later chapter how the coming of foreign competition weakened these beliefs in the following decade.

Our consideration of the development of trade in the colonial dependencies and its lasting effects upon their government has carried us away from the concurrent developments in general trade policy and the progress of free trade as it affected the colonies

of settlement. We must now return to take up the thread of fiscal reform after Huskisson's great measures of the late 'twenties.

The two most important products supplied by the colonies of settlement were wheat which came mainly from Canada and to a less extent from Australia, and wool which was imported into Great Britain from the colonies in the Southern hemisphere in increasing quantities in every successive decade after the 'twenties. There was never any question over the importation of wool, the raw material on which the most flourishing British industry depended, and timber, though of importance in the trade of Canada, did not give rise to much difficulty, but the corn duties were the main subject of debate in imperial fiscal policy for all the thirty years that followed the peace of 1815. The question was really a national one between the English agricultural landlords who wanted to get the best possible price for their wheat and other corn and the manufacturer who wanted cheap breadstuffs to supply the labouring classes wherever they came from. The supply of corn from the colonies was quite unimportant as compared with foreign importation and the interests of the outer empire were therefore little considered by either of the parties to the discussion.

Huskisson, however, was an exception, for he had strong imperial beliefs and was determined that every part of the Empire should have its share in the benefits of his fiscal reforms. His Act of 1822 admitted Canadian wheat to the British market under a preferential duty as compared with foreign wheat, and in 1825 the duty was fixed at 5s. a quarter whatever the price in Great Britain might be under the sliding scale. This was a great benefit to Canadian wheat growers and millers, for considerable quantities of American corn came over the Canadian border to be milled and exported to England by the St. Lawrence route in order to secure the advantage of the lower duty, and a prosperous flour-milling industry was established especially round Montreal. When Sir Robert Peel introduced a new sliding-scale of corn duties in 1842, the Canadian preference was retained but the petition of the Canadians for free importation of their wheat and flour was rejected.

The Manchester free-traders under the lead of John Bright and Richard Cobden believed that the Corn Laws were the last great

restriction of freedom of export. They impeded the trade in Lancashire cotton goods, for the agriculturists of Eastern Europe could only pay for them with the wheat they produced and a sliding scale of duties made it impossible to carry on such an exchange on any stable basis. But such economic arguments were too technical to have much popular appeal, and when the Anti-Corn Law League was founded in 1839 to enforce the demand for complete repeal by widespread agitation, the appeals to the great mass meetings it organised were directed mainly against the unpopular land-owning class, who were accused of using the Corn Laws as a device to further their own interests at the expense of starvation of the poor. The colonies and the needs of the outer empire were never mentioned and the struggle was entirely a domestic one between the landlords and the farmers on the one side and the merchants and manufacturers on the other. The victory of the latter with the repeal of the duties in 1846 had important imperial repercussions, but these were merely incidental and anticipations of them played no part in the movement. Three years later in 1849 the last remains of the restrictive Acts of Trade or Navigation Laws which had come down from the old empire of the seventeenth century were swept away. They had long lost their usefulness to the imperial economy and became merely irritating anachronisms, so that their disappearance was hardly regretted even by the most hardened protectionist.

The repeal of the Corn Laws with the consequent abandonment of imperial preference on Canadian wheat and flour was regarded in British North America with deep resentment and almost as an act of ill-faith. The blow to the Canadian corn trade was most damaging, for the industry had been built up on the imperial preferential duties. It coincided with a very severe financial crisis in Canada and the concurrent political riots in Montreal over the Rebellion Losses Bill which we mentioned in an earlier chapter gravely impaired the financial credit of the province. Some Canadians argued that if Great Britain was so regardless of the interests of the colonies as to tear apart the traditional system of commercial interdependence, it would be best for Canada to go her own way and find safety along with her greater and richer neighbour to the south. Thus an influential movement for annexation to the United States began to stir, and perhaps the most

dangerous moment in the history of Canada as a part of the British Empire had been reached.

Luckily the situation was saved by the joint efforts of the Canadian statesmen and financiers. The banking houses of Barings and Glyn Mills which managed Canadian loans on the London market put all their financial resources to the support of Canada's credit and stopped a catastrophic fall in the price of her securities. This act of faith that no government in the Empire would sink to the level of those American republics, whose repudiation of their debts had cost British investors such immense sums, was abundantly justified and Canada's financial integrity has never since been impugned. The credit for this was largely attributable to Sir Francis Hincks, the Finance Minister, and it was to him, too, that Canada was indebted for constructive measures of great importance that in the next twenty years converted her from a somewhat backward and primitive community into a modern and progressive state. By the promotion between 1850 and 1854 of new corporate enterprises for the construction of railways and canals Hincks induced the inflow of new supplies of British capital in the form of manufactured goods and a new stream of emigrants who opened up the fertile lands in the back of Upper Canada and so provided new markets for the older commercial towns on the Lakes and the St. Lawrence.

Such work as this is usually overshadowed in the pages of our text-books by accounts of the political and constitutional wrangles which were a survival from earlier years, but in reality the economic development of the 'fifties is of far greater and more permanent importance in the history of the Empire. "Canada a nation" was now no longer regarded as covering the seditious aspirations of rebels but as a proper counter to the propaganda of the annexationists and gradually both French and English-speaking Canadians turned away from their barren political complaints against a distant Colonial Office to the development of their common country for which now they alone were responsible. The British change of policy of 1846 and 1849 was gravely resented at the time, but to Canada its real importance lies in the fact that responsible government first became a reality when it had matters of first rate national interest to deal with.

We have remarked that in the repeal of the Corn Laws thought

of colonial interests played no part, but this does not mean that they were left entirely out of count by the statesmen who were responsible for the government of the outer empire. It is certain that Lord Elgin as Governor-General and Palmerston as Foreign Secretary were deeply concerned to find a way for compensating Canada for the loss of her British market. It had been suggested in the United States that the interests of both countries would be served at least as well by the arrangement of a commercial treaty of reciprocity as by political annexation which certainly could not be accomplished without serious strife. At an earlier date a British Cabinet would have set its face against any treaty with a foreign power covering only one part of the Empire, but times had changed and freedom from governmental interference wherever possible was now the order of the day. Palmerston therefore instructed the British ambassador to do all he could to facilitate negotiations between the Canadian and United States representatives on purely business lines. The negotiations were long drawn out, however, and it was not until 1853 that the treaty was agreed on to cover all the provinces of British North America and to last for a period of ten years unless extended by mutual agreement. Reciprocal free trade was to prevail between the United States and British North America and the advantages of the improvements along the great common water-way of the St. Lawrence were to be shared on the same terms by both sides alike.

It has sometimes been suggested that the benefits derived by Canada under the Reciprocity Treaty arose from the fact that she as a producer of raw materials could now supply these freely in exchange for the manufactures of the United States and no longer be dependent on British manufacturers and traders. In reality the case was very different, for both Canada and the United States were rapidly developing new countries and both needed larger supplies of manufactures than they could furnish from their own resources, the products that were exchanged were much the same on either side and each continued to import largely from Great Britain as before. However, Canada probably benefited more directly from the treaty than did the States and her development was accelerated to the common benefit of the Empire. Its ties were not weakened as had been feared, but on the contrary the cry for political annexation died away and the

idea of Canada as a nation standing in the relation of a partner to Great Britain and no longer as a ward spread steadily as the integral concept of Canadian political thought. For the Empire as a whole the important new fact was that commercial freedom was now placed securely in the hands of the colonists of British North America to suit their interests as they themselves thought fit. They were no longer bound by the commercial policy of the United Kingdom. That was now whole-heartedly in support of free trade while Canada henceforward moved in the same direction of protection and a high tariff on imported goods in which the United States were moving.

As in British North America so in the antipodes the essential factors in the firm establishment of new and prosperous communities did not lie in planned and organised governmental policy but in economic happenings that were of world-wide effect. The greatest needs of the colonies in Australia and New Zealand were first an influx of population of vigorous and dependable character and secondly the production of staples which would command ready and profitable markets. New South Wales had made a beginning on the basis of convict labour introduced at the expense of the national Exchequer, but it was very costly and undependable and it was not until the coming of the pastoral industry and the profitable sale of its wool on the European markets that Australia attracted free emigrants and even then its rise in population was slow. Despite all their abundant advertisement the Wakefield schemes did little or nothing to accelerate the growth of the new communities and it may even be said that incessant governmental juggling with systems of land grants at the behest of theoretical colonisers hampered rather than aided emigration. The change came not from any new plan, but from the natural incentive of mankind to seek for gold.

The first gold discoveries were made in the placer fields of California in 1848 and an immense migration from the older settled parts of the United States and from the British Isles began to stream across the plains and deserts of the West and by sea round Cape Horn or across the Isthmus of Panama towards the lure of what seemed to be an inexhaustible treasure house, where wealth was to be won for the asking. The first discovery of gold in New South Wales dates back to 1823 and thenceforward until

1848 further discoveries were occasionally reported privately to successive Governors. The finders were always dissuaded from making them known publicly owing to the dangers that would arise to the social order of a community containing a high proportion of convicted criminals. But in 1851 after transportation had ceased, a practical miner named Edward Hargraves who had had experience on the California fields made a discovery of a workable placer deposit at Bathurst which could no longer be kept secret. Within a few weeks men of all classes, fired by memories of what had happened in California, were flocking to the diggings, and employers all over the colony were seriously alarmed at the threat to the labour supply. Later in the same year fresh finds were reported from various parts of New South Wales, but they were completely overshadowed by the rich discoveries in Victoria especially at Ballarat and Bendigo. Before the beginning of 1852 all Australia went wild with gold fever, and as the news spread to England there was such an incentive to emigration as had never been seen before.

Australia was the first to experience those vast social changes that were caused by the new discoveries. There was an acute shortage of labour and a tremendous increase in prices which had to be compensated by rising wages. Before the end of 1852 the flow of emigrants had begun to reach Australian ports, and Victoria, for example, which had only received 6,000 incomers in the previous year now gained a new population of nearly a hundred thousand. The results on the social order were profound, for the new wealth, though it was squandered at first in reckless profusion and extravagance, gave Australia for the first time abundant surplus funds with which to buy the material equipment she needed for her development. Where her credit had before been small and she had difficulty in raising loans on the London market now investors would purchase Australian loans readily and hence new schemes of development could easily be financed. The British manufacturer of secondary products could do a larger trade, the shipowners could earn better freights and passage money and the Australian primary producers of wool could sell their exports more readily.

To the ordinary Englishman the southern colonies had never been particularly attractive because of the evil memories called up by the name "Botany Bay," by which they were familiarly known

though several of the colonies had never received convicts. That reputation was now entirely swept away by the stories of the wealth to be made at the gold diggings and they became the goal of every enterprising emigrant. Even if rapid fortune did not reward him, he could certainly earn far higher wages than any he could get in Great Britain. He could obtain land for the asking if he would promise to work it and he would find none of the distress and scarcity which were chronic in the England of the 'fifties. Freedom from social distinctions was also an undoubtedly attractive feature of the new communities, and in sum all these inducements added up to make the idea of emigration more widespread among the English lower and middle classes than it had ever been before. In earlier migrations men often left the old country with a sense of political grievance against the system under which they had failed to succeed and often even of hatred of their home land. The emigrants to Australia and New Zealand in the 'fifties, however, went out of their own free will to better themselves and they retained all their sentiments of patriotism and affection for the land they still called "Home." This feeling was of great influence in the shaping of imperial thought for many years and undoubtedly played a part in making Australian development different from that of the British North American colonies. But if the gold discoveries had not come to stimulate such a great and sudden accession to the labour supply, it is probable that the lines of development would have diverged far more widely.

The northern part of the island continent is not far removed from the outliers of Asia with its teeming populations and during the 'forties serious attempts were made to establish posts there where Asiatic labourers might be employed in opening-up new plantations belonging to white proprietors. Had those attempts succeeded or the deficiency of labour in the colonies in South-Eastern Australia persisted, there can be no doubt that a large part of their development would have been carried out by imported coolie labour and the deep-rooted policy of preserving a White Australia would never have been possible.

The complete victory of the new commercial policy of the Manchester School was marked by Gladstone's free trade budget of 1853. Almost the last relics of preferential treatment for colonial produce were abolished as nuisances offending against the pure

application of the new doctrine. The colonies could not be driven out of the Empire, for national honour forbade, but if they wished to go, their parting should be furthered in every way possible. Above all it was essential that no further colonial responsibilities should be assumed. Better profits could be made by trading with foreigners than with colonists who must be protected and governed in orderly fashion which necessarily involved expense. The wheel had come full circle. The old colonial empire of the eighteenth century had been valued as a closed market for British manufactures and for the employment of British capital in the raising of tropical products in a plantation economy. Now, a century later, the theorists, who looked at the Empire from a pure commercial standpoint, would have liked to have seen the last of our remaining colonial dependencies because of their expense and the unavoidable necessity of preserving at least some sort of commercial regulations for them. The old policy had been, proved false because empire involves something more than commercial profit; the new policy at its inception and as enunciated by its more enthusiastic supporters was just as commercial and it took twenty years before the true implication of Britain's inescapable imperial destiny again began to appear in the utterances of our leaders.

CHAPTER IX

THE EXTENSION OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA TO THE PACIFIC AND THE COMING OF CONFEDERATION, 1843-71

AT the accession of Queen Victoria the settled areas of British North America lay entirely on the Atlantic side of the continent and extended little to the west of the St. Lawrence. But even there by far the greater part of the land between the river and the sea-board was unoccupied, as a good deal of it is in fact to-day. There were certain settled areas scattered through the virgin forests of the region and colonisation was no longer as it had been a mere sea-board and riverine affair. Beyond the banks of the great river and the fertile peninsula between the Great Lakes, where the opening-up of the land had proceeded further than anywhere else, there were neither settled communities nor agricultural development anywhere across the whole breadth of the continent to the shores of the Pacific. Southward beyond the yet undefined frontier with the United States the westward movement of settlers had gone further, and by the end of the 'thirties the Illinois country round Lake Michigan and the headwaters of the Mississippi had been effectively occupied and pioneer farmers were beginning to push out into the north-west. The Americans were thus far ahead on the western trail before the Canadians had even started, and if future difficulties were to be avoided it was necessary that the limits between British and American sovereignty should be agreed.

Although of far greater ultimate importance it was not, however, the western frontier that brought the boundary questions to a head, but the clash of rival land-hungry settlers on the frontier between Maine and New Brunswick which had been in dispute ever since 1783. While the country was untouched forest the exact line did not matter much, but when streams of rival settlers with different political allegiance flowed into unoccupied country and rival individuals were pushing their claims to the particular plots they coveted, the danger of trouble became acute. In the disputed lands there was some of the finest pine timber in North

America and the contest for it between rival lumbermen led to dangerous rioting in 1842. Joint action was imperative and Lord Ashburton, the head of the banking house of Baring Brothers, who was much respected by both sides was sent to negotiate an agreement with Daniel Webster, the American Secretary of State. The resulting Ashburton Treaty of 1843 solved most of the frontier questions by splitting the difference, but it was in an additional clause which had given rise to little discussion that the greatest importance for the future lay. From the head of the Great Lakes and across the prairies there were no clear natural features to serve as a dividing line, and it was therefore decided to lay down the forty-ninth parallel of latitude as the frontier on the map as far as the Rocky Mountains, leaving the actual delimitation on the ground to be carried out as settlement proceeded.

The advantage of having made the treaty on these common-sense principles became apparent three years later when the United States had taken California from Mexico and thus carried the flag right across the continent. Between California and the border of Russian America to the north there lay the country known as Oregon in which both British and American fur traders had been trapping for half a century without any delimitation of their respective rights. But now American settlers were trekking towards Oregon across the plains of the north-west and they demanded the whole country for themselves, and the extinction of the claims of the Hudson's Bay Company. The matter reached a dangerous pitch when it was brought into American electoral battles with the cry "Fifty-four forty or fight" demanding that the British should be shut out from all access to the shores of the Pacific. It was the most acute crisis in Anglo-American relations for many years, but again the danger was averted by a sensible compromise. The frontier along the forty-ninth parallel was continued right down to the sea, but the whole of Vancouver Island was left under British sovereignty though a part of it lay south of the line. With the exception of certain minor points which were cleared up later, this treaty completed the frontier from sea to sea and the two powers were left to pursue their westward development without fear of interference.

In the exploration of the vast western wilderness of Rupert's Land the Hudson's Bay Company held rights that dated from their

A HUNDRED YEARS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

charter of 1670 and their traders who entered the country from the north-east by Hudson's Bay had a monopoly of trapping and bartering for furs with the Indians. Those traders were mostly Scotsmen and Englishmen coming out direct from Britain, but when the challenge to their monopoly came from the North-West Company it was based upon Montreal with Canadian capital and its employees were mainly French-Canadians. Thus early both English and French speakers were active in the work and the bitter rivalry of the two fur companies was ended by agreement before our period opens, men of both stocks were employed side by side, an indication of the way in which co-operation between the two peoples was gradually progressing without either absorbing or excluding the other. The development of Canada was to be the joint work of both.

On the Pacific coast the Hudson's Bay Company had been carrying on fur-trading enterprises on a modest scale since the beginning of the century, and although their first approach had been from the interior over the mountains their later trade was mainly carried on by men who had come by sea. The Oregon agreement of 1846 consolidated the Company's rights in the region and gradually British settlers came in by the Pacific to build up a new community in Vancouver Island and on the adjacent mainland shore near the mouth of the Fraser River. The first great impetus to this new colony of British Columbia came after the Californian gold discoveries. Vancouver Island had been formally granted to the Hudson's Bay Company in 1849 on condition that they took out settlers, but this type of enterprise was not attractive to its leaders who were only interested in the fur trade and progress came from a different direction. As it became rapidly more difficult for newcomers to find fortune in the Californian diggings, prospectors moved north in search of new fields. In 1858 gold was found on the Fraser River and a mad rush of disappointed miners from San Francisco began. Within four years a very considerable population had poured into British Columbia, in the first instance largely composed of Americans who began the first settlements in the interior of the region with the great Caribou gold rush of 1859. But the new colony was saved from complete Americanisation by the incoming in 1862 of settlers from Upper Canada (Ontario) who traversed the plains from east to west by

way of Manitoba and Fort Garry, the Hudson's Bay Company's post there which is now the city of Winnipeg. Their journey blazed the trail for the great line of communication of the future and showed definitely that the fortunes of British Columbia were irrevocably linked with those of the colonies on the St. Lawrence. The outlines of the Canada of the future were gradually appearing, and it was already clear that the British North America which already stretched from sea to sea on the map would ere long become a reality and not a mere geographical expression. From Nova Scotia in the east to British Columbia in the west must be the home of a new nation and it was in the gradual realisation of this pregnant fact that a new spirit was born in Canadian politics to carry them from their eternal local wrangles into a wider sphere.

The union of Upper and Lower Canada into a single province as recommended by Lord Durham proved to be a hollow sham from the first. His belief that it would facilitate the anglicisation of the French-Canadians was quite illusory, while from the standpoint of practicable government it proved impossible to amalgamate the systems of two parts of the province, Canada East and Canada West as they were called, that were so essentially different. Almost everything remained dual and when anything was done for the benefit of one part it had to be balanced with a corresponding measure for the other or the bill had little chance of passing through the legislature. Measures of external importance like the Reciprocity Treaty that were of common benefit were properly debated and readily accepted, but most of the time of the legislature was for some years devoted to modernising the legislative and administrative systems of the two parts of the province independently. In French-speaking Canada the old feudal features of the seigneurial system were abolished while in the English-speaking part most attention was devoted to the building-up of municipal government and the creation of a satisfactory road and railway system to stimulate the prosperity of the community and to extending the franchise so as to give men of all classes a share in their own government. It was in work such as this that Canadian statesmen and the Canadian electorate learned experience. The Governor-General ceased to take part in the deliberations of the Cabinet or Council of Ministers and responsible government became a reality. The old constitutional questions had been

charter of 1670 and their traders who entered the country from the north-east by Hudson's Bay had a monopoly of trapping and bartering for furs with the Indians. Those traders were mostly Scotsmen and Englishmen coming out direct from Britain, but when the challenge to their monopoly came from the North-West Company it was based upon Montreal with Canadian capital and its employees were mainly French-Canadians. Thus early both English and French speakers were active in the work and the bitter rivalry of the two fur companies was ended by agreement before our period opens, men of both stocks were employed side by side, an indication of the way in which co-operation between the two peoples was gradually progressing without either absorbing or excluding the other. The development of Canada was to be the joint work of both.

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settled and new issues arose to divide parties in which there was no longer a temptation to blame the British Government and the Colonial Office when anything went wrong. It took ten or fifteen years for the change to be really completed, but by the early 'sixties it can be said that Canada really knew that she was mistress in her own house. The intricacies of Canadian politics in that troubled period belong to her domestic history and need not concern us save in their result. That was of prime importance to the Empire as a whole, for it led directly to the accomplishment of the project for a confederation of British North America which Durham had put forward in 1839 as the ultimate means of solving Canada's problems. The project had slumbered for a quarter of a century, but in the 'sixties it was revived and carried to completion because it was the only way out of the deadlock into which Canadian parties had fallen.

The early 'fifties had seen a boom in full swing. Emigrants and loan capital had poured in as never before, but the gold discoveries in Australia diverted a large part of the stream of men to the antipodes while financial mismanagement and over-spending destroyed the confidence of the British investor during the hard times that followed the Crimean War. The bubble of the boom burst with bank crashes and the bankruptcy of thousands of farmers precipitated by the bad harvests of 1857 and 1858. The increasing tension in the United States which was fast leading to civil war diminished the demand of Canada's best market, and the same causes plunged the Maritime Provinces into commercial chaos. The coming of the steamship and the increasing use of iron for shipbuilding seriously injured the principal industry of Nova Scotia which had built fast and staunch wooden schooners for all the coastal trades of North America and the West Indies. The outbreak of the Civil War in 1861 and the maritime blockade of the Southern States brought the crisis to a head, and 1862 was one of the most difficult years in the history of British North America.

Beyond all the local difficulties there were reasons of the gravest importance why some measure of confederation and closer association between the provinces was more imperatively needed than ever before. The Northern States bitterly resented the sympathy with the rebel South that was actively expressed by a large section of the English governing classes, and many influential

Americans proclaimed that, when once they had dealt with the rebellion, it would be Canada's turn next and they would drive the last vestiges of British rule from North America. Such threats were a warning of the military danger that might arise at any moment and clearly a single confederated government would be better able to deal with it than a number of disconnected colonies. During the winter, when the St. Lawrence was closed by ice, the military forces in Canada were almost cut off from reinforcements or supplies from Great Britain since the only practicable way of approach lay across American territory through Portland (Maine) or New York. An essential measure of defence was therefore to link Quebec and Montreal with New Brunswick and Nova Scotia by an inter-colonial railway. Such a railway, too, would be of great economic value even if the aggrieved Americans did not go so far as to undertake military action but merely carried out their threat to denounce the Reciprocity Treaty and withdrew the bonding privileges for Canadian produce which enabled Canadian produce to be dealt with free of customs duties at American ports. In the many informal private conversations that went on between representative public men of the various colonies Edward Watkin, the enterprising British railway financier, who was the agent of Messrs. Baring Brothers, played an influential part as reconciler and negotiator and he was interested not only in the inter-colonial project but also in the schemes for building a trans-continental railway link which were of more interest to the Canadians. The Union Pacific Railroad across the United States was approaching completion and Watkin and his Canadian friends saw that unless British North America could forge a similar link between the Atlantic and Pacific her commercial connections would more than ever be at the mercy of American interests. Watkin's work in these critical years was of great importance, for as a private individual he had open to him channels of information for the British Government which could hardly be provided by the official representatives of the Queen in the colonies.

It was the Government of Nova Scotia, led by Joseph Howe, the able statesman who had won responsible government for the colony twenty-five years before and had been the outstanding figure in the Maritimes ever since, who first formally approached the Colonial Office with proposals for an inter-colonial convention

to work out a federal scheme. Howe was told that the British Cabinet and Parliament would be sympathetic providing the initiative came from the colonies. In his reply the Duke of Newcastle, the Colonial Secretary, showed his realisation that, since the colonies were now fully responsible for their own government, the evolution of such a major political measure as confederation must be the work of their own statesmen without any interference from the Imperial Government. It shows how far matters had progressed since the preparation of the Act uniting Upper and Lower Canada in 1840.

Meanwhile politics in the Canadas were going from bad to worse and the impossibility of carrying on the government of two such diverse communities with a single legislature and executive became more evident year by year. Canada West (Ontario) found it unbearable that, now that her population outnumbered that of Canada East (Quebec), it should still be represented only by the same proportion of members as it had had twenty years before.

The cry for representatives in proportion to population ("Rep. by Pop.") swept English-speaking Canada, and the stubborn resistance to it of the French-Canadians in the legislature raised such bitter feeling between the two sides that attempts even to find a common basis for carrying on the non-controversial business of government were obstructed. Neither party could find a sufficient and dependable majority and the unhappy situation of the province may be summed up in the words of George Brown, perhaps the most far-sighted Premier of the period and the foremost advocate of the federal idea. He claimed that the legislative union between Upper and Lower Canada had completely failed. It had resulted in a heavy debt, burdensome taxation, great political abuses and universal dissatisfaction. The union, from the antagonisms developed through differences of origin, local interests and other causes could no longer be continued with advantage to the people. Within the three years between 1861 and 1864 three, or in fact four, ministries and two general elections marked the position of hostility and paralysis into which the government of Canada had fallen.

The Maritime Provinces despaired of getting any decisive agreement with the precarious ministries that were succeeding one another with such bewildering rapidity in Canada, and

decided to go ahead by themselves. Early in 1864 each of them appointed representatives to meet in conference and consider the possibility of a union of the three provinces under one Government and Legislature. The conference did not meet in Charlottetown (Prince Edward Island) until September, but the news of its convening had potent repercussions in Canada.

The leaders of the opposite parties, John A. Macdonald and Georges Cartier on the one side, George Brown and Sir Etienne Pascal Taché on the other, decided to meet together and attempt to thresh out a solution to the constitutional deadlock. Such a solution now seemed to all to lie only in the adoption of the federal principle and the joint Committee finally resolved to promote it by legislative action. The Canadas were to be federated after the dissolution of their union and the measure was to be so drawn that the Maritime Provinces and the North-West Territory could be incorporated if they so desired. The Charlottetown Conference offered the opportunity of negotiation and accordingly, when it met, a Canadian delegation came down to discuss the practicability of a general confederation covering the whole of British North America. Things moved fast and, before the Canadian delegates left Halifax to return home, it had been agreed to meet in a full conference at Quebec to deal with the whole matter *de novo*.

The Quebec Conference met on October 10th, 1864, behind closed doors, and after exhaustive discussions the celebrated Quebec Resolutions were agreed upon as the basis upon which the new Confederation should be established. The British Cabinet of course had to be kept informed of what was going on, for though it was known to be favourable to Confederation, that must be formally brought into being by an Act of the Imperial Parliament which alone could legislate for all the provinces. That power was nominally unimpaired and in as full force as it had been since the beginning of the new empire. In reality, of course, a profound change had taken place since the introduction of responsible government; the real deciding power had passed to the legislatures of the provinces and it was there that the critical debates must take place. It took two years before they were completed. Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island refused to

accept the Quebec Resolutions and New Brunswick at a general election first decided against them but then changed its mind and voted in favour.

The deciding factors came from the United States which announced at the beginning of 1865 the determination to abrogate the Reciprocity Treaty when the ten years for which it had been concluded came to an end in 1866. The British Government strove to negotiate its renewal in order to avoid the inevitable shock that the abolition of reciprocity must inflict upon Canada's commercial prosperity, but the victorious Northerners were determined to mark their resentment at England's attitude during the Civil War and to force annexation upon the Canadians if they wished to retain their free markets in the United States. All the negotiations therefore failed, and the Canadians smarting under a grievance were confirmed in their acceptance of the idea of federation as a means of strengthening themselves against American pretensions. The attempted invasion of Canada by Fenians from United States territory in 1866 in order to bring pressure upon Great Britain and secure the independence of Ireland produced such feeling in Upper Canada as to neutralise the last opposition, and in the course of the next few months matters proceeded more rapidly.

The Quebec Resolutions embodied the agreements on which the new constitution was to be based, but they had to be embodied in proper legal form in a bill for presentation to Parliament. Delegates were sent to London to carry out this detailed work in consultation with the Colonial Office and the parliamentary draftsmen, and the British Cabinet facilitated its progress by its generally sympathetic attitude.

In earlier stages Joseph Howe had done great work for his native province, but now that the Maritimes were to be merged in the larger sphere of the Dominion he did his utmost to impede the progress of the measure. He led an Opposition delegation from Nova Scotia to persuade the British public against it, but luckily his efforts completely failed, and when the bill came before Parliament its passage was comparatively uneventful. This may have been due in part to some lack of interest on the part of the average Englishman, but it would be truer to say that he believed that the people in the colonies knew their own business best, that

they were responsible for what was proposed and that it was not his place to interfere.

The bill was presented to the House of Lords by the Earl of Carnarvon as Colonial Secretary in the session of 1867 and after interesting debates which were mainly confined to the experts in colonial matters it received the royal assent at the end of March to come into operation on July 1st. No changes were made in what had been agreed upon at Quebec, and it was evident that the most influential members of the Imperial Parliament regarded its powers as merely needed to register decisions that had been reached by the people they affected. The debates showed what great changes had taken place in the Empire since Durham's time and especially the revolution in the attitude of England towards the colonies of settlement. By the Act a new nation was called into being. Great Britain was no longer to be guardian to an infant ward, but a partner with co-equal duties. The delegation of all the powers of the Imperial Parliament over British North America was not an act of abnegation, but a formal recognition of changes that had silently come about.

It is unnecessary here to examine the provisions of the Act at length, for their importance in detail belongs mainly to the domestic history of Canada, but there are some points that had a direct bearing on the history of the Empire as a whole. The old geographical term "British North America" was replaced by the "Dominion of Canada," based upon the ancient term *dominium* which for many centuries had been applied to outlying portions of the territories under the Crown. The separation of United Canada into the two provinces of Quebec and Ontario and the reservation to their legislatures of most of the matters affecting the social life of the people meant that the two cultures and ways of living of French-speakers and English-speakers could progress independently side by side. Equal co-operation was to be the guiding principle of the new Dominion where common action was needed for the good of the whole. But French Canada rather turned inward to its own affairs and the safeguarding of its own social structure and left the more progressive movements to be undertaken by the English-speakers. This does not mean that individual French Canadians have not taken a leading part in the government of the Dominion as well as in their own province.

But on the whole there can be no doubt that the British stock has been more prominent in the extension of settlement and the development of the latent resources of the Dominion.

In 1867, as we have already shown, the westward extension towards the Pacific had hardly begun, but it was to be the most significant movement of the next thirty years. In the negotiations of the 1864 Conference at Quebec the subject commanded much attention. To satisfy the Maritime Provinces it was formally agreed that the Central Government should assume responsibility for the construction of an inter-colonial railway, but Canada would only agree to this on condition that the Maritimes would accept the declaration that the western railroad to the Pacific was a subject of the highest importance to the federation to be undertaken as soon as the finances of the Dominion would permit.

British Columbia had refused to enter the Confederation on the grounds that she was separated from it by the vast and unopened areas of Rupert's Land and the North-West Territories which were still in the hands of the Hudson's Bay Company under the terms of their charter of 1670. Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland, it may also be remarked, refused to join, though on different grounds, and it was not until 1873 that the former came in. The cause of British Columbia's refusal was removed largely by the efforts of Sir Edward Watkin, who had begun as early as 1862 to strive for the reconstruction of the Hudson's Bay Company and the relinquishment of its governmental powers. The Company under its old management was averse to any settlement of the lands under its control and was very luke-warm in listening to Watkin's proposal to improve communications between Canada and the interior. However, they were willing to listen to proposals for the purchase of the undertaking outright, and at length with the aid of the Barings this was effected and the ancient Company passed into new and more progressive hands in 1863.

The way was thus opened for the furtherance of plans of westward expansion and it was this that made such schemes a matter of practical politics at the Quebec Conference of 1864. The great coalition ministry of French and English-speaking Canada found common ground for action in the north-west, for there were already French-Canadian settlers on the Red River in the very centre of the continent and many of the trappers were of French

extraction. Accordingly they proposed that the Imperial Government should buy out the Company's territorial rights with funds provided by loan and then should place the whole country across to the shores of the Pacific under the administration of the new Dominion whose coming now seemed certain. The Imperial Government agreed and the Company was willing to negotiate as to the amount of compensation to be received.

Matters were hastened by the new threat of annexation that came from beyond the border. Already American settlers were coming in from the States of the North-West and a strong agitation was set on foot there to seize the territory either with or without compensation. The purchase of Russian America by the United States in 1867 raised the hopes of the annexationists high and they believed that by bringing pressure to bear on Great Britain they could secure the cession regardless of the interests of the new Dominion for which they cared little. If they could accomplish their aims, the Dominion would be shut off from the Pacific and the communications of the north-west would lead away from Montreal and Toronto, and be planned from north to south to serve the interests of the American railway companies. Of course the Imperial Government was alive to the danger and firmly refused to yield to American pressure. In collaboration with the new Dominion Government immediately after its formation the negotiations with the Hudson's Bay Company were pushed on as fast as possible in London, but there was a serious hitch in the territory itself. The fears of the French-Canadians and the half-breeds on the Red River were fanned by annexationists from the United States who told them that their rights were being pushed aside by the Dominion Government which thought only of the desires of English-speaking Canadians. However, it was not until after the Red River Territory had been formed into a new province of Manitoba by an act of the Canadian Parliament in 1870 that matters came to a head and the half-breeds broke out in insurrection under the lead of Louis Riel.

By then the transfer of the whole of Rupert's Land and the North-west Territories to the Dominion had been accomplished and the danger that the Empire would be shut off from the Pacific had been averted. The Dominion now stretched from ocean to ocean and only British Columbia remained to be included.

There had been some hesitation there as to whether union with the Confederation should be accepted or no. When the Imperial Government replaced the old Crown colony form of government by a representative system with an elective legislature the hesitation came to an end and the electors voted overwhelmingly in favour of union. This was effected by Imperial Order-in-Council in 1871 and the Dominion at last stretched from sea to sea. All the territories in British North America were thus united with the exception of Prince Edward Island which did not come in until 1873 and Newfoundland which has continued to preserve its separate existence.

The process of completing the trans-continental railway link which was foreshadowed took more than twenty years and we shall have to trace it in a later chapter in connection with the economic progress of the Dominion.

CHAPTER X

PROGRESS AND DECLINE IN THE DEPENDENCIES, 1842-70

THE outstanding fact in our imperial history in the middle period of the nineteenth century is undoubtedly the progress of the colonies of settlement which quite overshadowed the old plantation colonies that had attracted so much attention in the preceding period. As they moved onwards to complete responsibility for their own affairs, the differentiation between them and the colonies which necessarily depended for their order and good government on the United Kingdom became more and more clearly marked. In the first half of the century all the oversea territories of the Crown with the exception of India were grouped together as "the British dependencies," but as the differentiation became clearer this term was gradually restricted to the small outposts of the Empire like Malta, Gibraltar, Heligoland and the Falkland Islands that were held for strategic reasons and the tropical colonies in which the proportion of men of European stock was small. The term "Crown colonies" also came into common use. Down to the 'forties it was accurately confined to certain of the dependencies, which like Trinidad and British Guiana had been added to the Empire in the great wars. Their government was administered directly as part of the prerogative of the Crown without being based upon Acts of Parliament as in the colonies of settlement or upon prescription as in the old colonies of the West Indies. By about 1850, however, this accurate limitation of the term fell into disuse and the term "Crown colonies" came like "dependencies" to be applied loosely to all the British territories oversea, save India, which were not colonies of settlement. The two terms became practically synonymous, and using them in this sense we may say that at the middle of the nineteenth century the British dependencies fell roughly into four groups:

- (a) the West Indies (including British Guiana and British Honduras) and Bermuda,
- (b) the Eastern dependencies, i.e., Mauritius, Ceylon, the Straits Settlements, Labuan and Hong Kong,
- (c) the West African Settlements, and

(d) the European dependencies, Malta, Gibraltar and Heligoland.

There were large British interests in the Pacific islands, but before 1870 no territorial sovereignty was exercised there.

The development of these dependencies was less striking in this period than the momentous changes that were in progress in the colonies of settlement, but movements were taking shape in all of them save the European dependencies which had a significant influence upon imperial history after 1870 when a new colonial rivalry between the Powers began.

The most far-reaching change in imperial policy concerning them took place in the colonies of the Caribbean. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that region played a very important part in British imperial policy, but when the United States rose to power and the Latin-American republics won their independence, there was a significant change and the Caribbean ceased to be a cockpit of European ambitions. The proclamation of the Monroe Doctrine (1823) under the aegis of the United States with British support closed the western world off from Europe and the two English-speaking Powers were left as the only two nations having major political interests there.

In the first half of the nineteenth century American sovereignty was carried down step by step to the northern shore of the Caribbean Sea. Louisiana round the mouth of the Mississippi was purchased by the United States from Napoleonic France and East and West Florida from Spain, while Texas was acquired by conquest from Mexico. By 1846 the American frontier had been carried right across to the Rio Grande and California was occupied on the Pacific Coast. Cuba and Puerto Rico remained as the only Spanish colonies in the West Indies. During the 'forties both Great Britain and France were suspected by the Americans of designs upon Cuba which was rapidly becoming a great producer of sugar, but these suspicions were baseless. The Cuban plantations were worked by cheap slave labour, and the unremitting efforts of the British naval squadrons on the West African coast were directed to prevent the sailing of Spanish and Portuguese slavers with American backers to carry their cargoes of negroes to the Cuban slave markets. Those efforts, however, were unavailing and the slave trade continued almost unchecked.

By the late 'forties the Cuban question was overshadowed by the rising interest of the United States in Central America and projects for the construction of a trans-isthmian canal. Britain had long had territorial interests there in the logwood-cutting settlements of Belize and on the Mosquito Shore which stood across one of the most practicable routes for a canal through Nicaragua to the Pacific. She also had some ill-defined claims in the Bay Islands lying off the coast of the Republic of Honduras and anti-British elements in the United States strove to link these things together as material for an attack upon all the British interests in the West Indies. However, the general readiness among responsible statesmen on both sides of the Atlantic to seek for a mutually satisfactory compromise, which we noted earlier at work on the Anglo-American border in North America, succeeded in clearing up these Caribbean disputes. In the Clayton-Bulwer treaty of 1850 each Power undertook to respect the rights of the other in the affairs of Central America and especially in the promotion of trans-isthmian canal projects. By a series of concurrent treaties the rights of Britain to the territory of Belize were recognised by the adjacent republics and the boundaries of the colony of British Honduras, as the territory was called, were defined. On the other hand Britain relinquished her claims in the Bay Islands and on the Mosquito Shore and thus cleared up matters that had been in dispute for a century and a half.

The settlement of this series of treaties attracted little notice at the time, but it was really of considerable importance. It marked Great Britain's removal of Caribbean questions from the list of her major political preoccupations. Her hands were so full in other parts of the world that she was prepared to regard with benevolent neutrality the extension of American interests in the Caribbean which was so vitally connected with the defence and communications of the United States. So long as her ancient rights of sovereignty in the islands were respected, she was prepared to concede that America was more directly concerned than herself in the political sphere, while her interests were confined to the domestic affairs of her own colonies.

Those affairs were in a very bad way, for the prosperity of the British West Indies had received a staggering blow from circumstances far beyond their own limits. The economic and social

system of the sugar colonies had been supported on three props which had all been cut away—the slave trade, which had supplied them with cheap labour, had ceased in 1807, the planters had lost the greater part of what remained by the emancipation measures of 1833–8 and the highly protected market for West Indian sugar in the United Kingdom was lost to them by the progress of the free trade movement which swept away all their privileged position before the middle of the century. The compensation for their slaves had been a heavy charge upon the British taxpayer, but only a comparatively small part of the £20,000,000 went into the pockets of the planters. Most of it went to pay off their debts to British capitalists whether for goods and services that had been supplied during the long depression of the sugar trade or for the mortgages that had recklessly been piled up on the security of their lands. The blow meant the complete downfall of the planter class, and it was driven home by the Sugar Duties Act of 1846 which finally destroyed all colonial preferences in 1851 and made the duties on foreign and colonial sugar in the United Kingdom equal. The measure was regarded by the planters as an unbelievable betrayal, for, while they had been deprived of their labour supply and saw their costs continually rising, they now had to compete on equal terms with the slave-grown sugar of Cuba and Brazil which could draw upon the cargoes of cheap negroes whose transport across the Atlantic the British navy was incapable of suppressing. Only the British consumer benefited, for in the ten years between 1845 and 1854 the price of his sugar was halved and his rate of consumption was doubled.

The confusion into which the whole social and economic system of the islands fell in these years was marked by the collapse of most of the local banks and the destruction of the credit system by which supplies of manufactured goods were furnished from Great Britain. The reduction of wages which the impoverished planters had to enforce led to universal strikes and disorder which in many colonies went as far as dangerous negro riots and incendiarism. The negroes could not possibly live even on their own very low scale when their money wages were halved, and their only refuge was to abandon their labour on the plantations and flee into the wilds to live on the most primitive scale on the meagre crops of what each family could produce for itself. A very

large proportion of the estates in certain of the colonies, and notably Jamaica, relapsed into the condition of jungle and the standard of life of the whole population, low as it always had been, fell with tragic speed.

The political consequences in two of the colonies, Jamaica and British Guiana, were very serious. In each of them the old system of representative government prevailed wherein the executive power was entirely in the hands of the Governor acting on the general policy laid down by the Colonial Office. But the task of raising funds to carry out that policy was in the hands of the Assembly elected on a narrow franchise like that in Great Britain before the Reform Act of 1832. In British Guiana this was further complicated by a cumbrous organisation coming down from Dutch times, but in both colonies the results were the same. The task of finding means to alleviate the desperate condition of the population was laid on the professional Governor who was doing his best in the face of enormous difficulties, but the power to obstruct his measures was in the hands of the narrow white clique of property owners who were seething with discontent at what had been done by the British Parliament and, despite the harm it could not fail to do to their own community, were determined to thwart the Governor in all that he was striving to effect. The system was an impossible one, and when it resulted in 1848 in the threat of the political associations that had been formed in the West Indies to refuse the payment of any taxes whatever, it was obvious that drastic action by the Home Government was imperative. The danger was increased by the stirrings of an agitation in the colonies for annexation by the United States, which had some connection with the contemporary movement in Canada that we mentioned in a previous chapter. It was not until 1854, however, after seven years of incessant quarrelling and ill-feeling that the Assembly in Jamaica was compelled to give way. In return for the promise of a substantial loan from Great Britain they consented to pass an Act for the amendment of the island's constitution by which the powers of the Governor and his nominated Council of officials were largely increased and the Assembly was deprived of its veto upon all financial measures that in their opinion were necessary for the carrying on of the government of the colony.

It is significant of the wide differentiation in the government of

different parts of the Empire according to their circumstances that at the very same time that colonies were achieving the right of self-government certain other colonies which had possessed representative institutions for many years had of necessity to consent to their limitation and to be governed as Crown colonies for their own safety. It is a striking illustration of the fact that the government of the Empire was not hampered by obedience to rigid theory but was adaptable to fit differing circumstances as they arose.

The^a situation in Mauritius was very similar to that in the West Indian colonies. Like them the island was entirely dependent upon the prosperity of the sugar industry and its social economy was built up of a narrow white class of planters who alone possessed the franchise and a mass of negro labourers without political rights. The planters strove to retain their privileged position intact by violent agitation against the Governor's measures, but as in Jamaica they were compelled to give way, and the government of Mauritius was more closely assimilated to that of the Crown colonies at the same period.

The degraded social condition of the mass of the population in all these dependencies was shown in a lurid light by the terrible epidemics of cholera and smallpox which devastated them during the 'fifties. There was almost a complete absence of sanitation or of organised medical services, and housing conditions were so deplorably bad that competent observers believed that there had been a most serious retrogression in morals and health among the whole mass of the people in these colonies since the days when it had been the interest of the planters to guard the health of their slaves in a rudimentary way for the same reasons that would have led them to protect their cattle or horses from disease. The labour difficulties in all the sugar colonies seemed insuperable, for since emancipation the negroes almost everywhere showed a repugnance to hard and regular work. It was the irregularity and undependability of the labour supply that compelled the planters to seek a new source of labourers elsewhere. The introduction of coolies from the East Indies was costly but effective, for they proved themselves dependable and hard workers. But their importation under indentures especially into British Guiana, Trinidad and Jamaica was accompanied by so many

abuses that the Government of India prohibited it for some years in the interests of their subjects. Only when very stringent regulations for the coolie trade and for the protection of the indentured labourers after their arrival had been made would the Government of India withdraw their prohibition. But the regulations added considerably to the expense of carrying on the plantations, and neither the supply of Indian coolies nor of coolies from China who were also tried could do much to rescue the West Indian colonies from the economic slough into which they had fallen. The permanent results were, however, of great importance, for a new element was thus introduced into the population of the colonies. The indentured coolies, whether Indian or Chinese, were entitled under their contracts of service to repatriation when those contracts came to an end. But very many of them, and after 1860 probably a majority, preferred to remain as free men in the colonies. Thus fresh problems were added to complicate further the difficult tasks of government in the tropical dependencies.

There was one beneficial result of the difficulties through which the sugar colonies were passing. Down to about 1840 a very large proportion of the landed estates were held by absentee owners who worked them under the management of attorneys and salaried overseers whose constant preoccupation was to satisfy the demands of their employers for profits sufficient to pay the heavy interest on the mortgages with which most of the estates were encumbered. They had little care for the well-being of their labourers but sought immediate profits along the easiest road. When the depression drove most of the estates into bankruptcy and the land had to be sold for whatever it would fetch, the only purchasers that could be found were men resident in the colonies, for British capitalists now fought shy of West Indian investments. The fortunes of the new resident owners were bound up in the colonies, and so it gradually came about that the communities began to see the rise of new leaders of public opinion. Instead of trying to model themselves on English squires and wasting their efforts on barren constitutional wrangles with their Governors and the Colonial Office to whom they attributed all their grievances, the new leaders began to take an interest in tackling social and economic problems for themselves. The whole economy of the sugar islands was based on new foundations in which the educated

mulattoes and a few propertied negroes became an important element. The old planter class with its arrogance and extravagance, its lack of sensibility and its quarrelsomeness fell before 1870 and in the next twenty years the West Indian communities were shaped in their modern form.

On the economic side the same period witnessed some regeneration of the sugar industry. New and more scientific methods of cultivation were introduced and, in place of the primitive sugar mills for treating the cane on individual plantations, new central factories were established where the extraction could be carried out with the aid of modern machinery to give a much better yield at a lower cost per ton. The output of sugar, especially in Mauritius, British Guiana and Trinidad, rapidly increased and some measure of prosperity returned to those colonies, but a new danger arose in the 'sixties and 'seventies from the rapid increase of the beet sugar industry in certain European countries fostered by the establishment of bounties which enabled the manufacturers to sell their sugar on the world market at prices which did not cover the cost of production and with which cane sugar found it hard to compete. The devastating effect of these beet sugar bounties did not reach its height until the 'eighties and 'nineties when it became a question of major importance, but even before this it had become so serious that efforts had to be directed to find other products to relieve the colonies from their dangerous dependence solely on sugar. Jamaica did more than other colonies in this direction and by 1870 more than half its exports consisted of products other than sugar. They included rum, coffee, pimento and ginger raised on their own plots by small cultivators, the negroes who had abandoned the plantations, and who gathered in villages where they lived their own lives independent of white landlords. In Grenada, Trinidad and Dominica cocoa became the most important crop and as the chocolate industry in Great Britain became steadily more important the prosperity of those colonies ceased to be entirely dependent upon the world price of sugar.

Unfortunately, however, the social condition of the negroes who formed the vast majority of the population in the islands, did not rise as some measure of prosperity was recovered. Labour was now free, but the labouring classes had no leaders who could

guide them to better conditions of living. They sank back into their primeval conditions of indifference to any rules of sanitation and health, and the conditions under which they lived both on their little patches in the country and their slums in the towns were deplorable. The old generation that had grown up under slavery knew some restraints and the conditions of an orderly life. Their descendants relapsed into indifference; they would neither pay the taxes that were necessary to carry on even the rudiments of government, nor obey the simplest regulations unless they were compelled. To many of them freedom meant freedom to live in sloth with the minimum of labour necessary 'or a bare subsistence. This was most noticeable in the larger colonies where there were large areas of uncultivated wilderness. In the densely peopled colonies, and especially Barbados, things were better, for the Barbadians were hard-working and intelligent and they won a high reputation all over the Caribbean for dependability. As in other parts of the world we must not generalise too much about the British West Indies. Each was a separate community with its own life and its own particular circumstances, and while the general run of happenings everywhere followed certain broad lines in the half century after emancipation, there were many exceptions and this ought to be remembered in tracing their part in our imperial history. The great disproportion between the numbers of the white population in the colonies and the preponderant blacks was always regarded by the Imperial Government with anxiety even at the height of their prosperity in the eighteenth century. Numberless devices were tried to promote emigration to the West Indies, but they were uniformly unsuccessful. When the colonies fell into the acute depression that we have been describing, the pure white population diminished steadily and the small rise in the numbers of people of mixed black and white blood did little to give the British West Indies what they most needed, a stable and energetic middle class. The Imperial Government tried somewhat half-heartedly to promote white emigration but entirely without success, for Canada, New Zealand and Australia offered infinitely better prospects than the tropical dependencies where conditions were so radically different from anything the emigrants knew at home. Thus by 1870 the disproportion between whites and blacks in the colonies had enormously increased and it was abundantly

evident that the West Indies were inevitably destined to a future that must depend on raising the negro in the scale of civilisation by the social efforts of a small official class of white governors and of missionaries and teachers assisted by subventions from Great Britain. For the rest they must depend for their leadership upon their own population of mixed blood.

The climax of Jamaica's troubles came in 1865 when the minds of negroes and white men alike were inflamed by the emancipation of the slaves in the United States and the defeat of their erstwhile masters in the Civil War. The negroes believed that their economic dependence would soon be brought to an end and that the millennium was at hand. The old fears of the whites of a negro massacre, such as Haiti had witnessed seventy years before, were roused to fever point, and by clumsy handling on the part of the Governor and the Colonial Office the situation was made more dangerous than it need have been. Serious rioting broke out in the parish of St. Thomas in the eastern part of the island, but it was suppressed without difficulty by troops sent from the capital. A reasonable exercise of police measures would have soon cleared up the difficulties, for the grievances of the negroes were almost wholly economic and the rioters were unorganised. But the authorities lost their heads and savage punishment was meted out to all the negro population of St. Thomas by the local whites and Governor Eyre showed, at least, regrettable weakness in not curbing the excesses of the colonists and the Jamaican Assembly against their black fellow subjects. The news of what had happened excited great public indignation in England and a Commission was sent out to investigate Governor Eyre's conduct, but meanwhile he had succeeded in persuading the frightened Assembly to abdicate its powers into the hands of the Crown. By an Order-in-Council of 1866 the last remnants of the representative system in Jamaica were swept away and replaced by Crown colony government.

About the same time the rest of the West Indian colonies possessing elected legislatures (with the exception of Barbados, the Bahamas and Bermuda) consented to resign their elective institutions and accept the status of Crown colonies. By 1875 the metamorphosis was complete. The last relics of the old colonial empire of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had dis-

appeared and the differentiation between the tropical colonies and the colonies of settlement was complete.

Turning now to the Eastern Dependencies, we may remark that while Mauritius followed much the same lines of development as the sugar islands of the West Indies and was faced by the same problems, Ceylon differed widely and had a history unlike any other colony. The Portuguese and Dutch who had nominally held it had gone there for the monopoly of the cinnamon trade, but they never occupied more than the coastal strip and left the native Kings of Kandy, who were the overlords of the interior, undisturbed. Within the first period after the final establishment of British rule (1815-33) our control was extended over the Kandyan kingdom and the whole of Ceylon with its different peoples of Sinhalese and Tamil descent was brought under effective government.

The task brought many problems of great complexity to which we cannot refer even in outline, for they mainly raised questions of land ownership and legal status of a very technical kind. We can only remark that the general principle adopted was the same as in British India, to interfere as little as possible with the age-old customs of the peoples concerned. They were only modified as far as was necessary to establish them on a basis of equity and any modifications were carried out through traditional native institutions. The work was done by the men on the spot with little interference by the Colonial Office which sensibly recognised that so complex and ancient a polity as Ceylon exhibited could not be governed according to ideas that might be applicable to other colonial dependencies. It is another typical instance of the sanely held opportunism that made our colonial government so subtly adaptable to every case as it arose. Not even such a confirmed doctrinaire as Earl Grey when Colonial Secretary ventured to apply his cherished theories to Ceylon.

The establishment of order and the assurance of just and settled government made possible the opening up of the whole island in a way never before known in its history. Thus great changes were set on foot in the economic sphere and it is those that give the principal interest to the story of the colony during the period. In earlier years the principal export had been cinnamon raised in

gardens in one part of the coast provinces. Under the Dutch the industry was a closely-guarded Government monopoly and cinnamon had to pay very heavy export duties during the early years of the British régime. But these were progressively reduced and the cultivators were relieved of the many restrictive regulations that had hampered the industry. By the 'fifties the natives were producing such large supplies of cinnamon that its price fell rapidly on the London market. But the cultivators had not to share their produce with European planters and they could make such good profits for themselves that their standard of living rose considerably. There was another industry also in native hands without the intervention of any European overseas. This was the production of copra from the fruit of the coconut palms which fringed the coast. The demand was not very great in the middle of the century, but the collections of the small men were readily purchased by the merchants at the ports and a regular profit on a purely native industry was assured.

On the other hand coffee-growing from the first was an industry organised and managed by British planters with native labourers who were paid by wages and took neither the risk nor the gains of the planter. The culture of coffee began about 1840 when it was found that the foot-hills of Ceylon were particularly suited to the crop. At first the cargoes exported received the benefit of a preferential duty on entering Great Britain, but the coming of free trade after 1845 reduced and finally swept away the preference, much to the discontent of the planters like others of the Empire's primary producers. Their grievance was compensated by the undertaking by the Government of a large programme of public works. The greatest expenses in the coffee planter's budget were the exceedingly heavy transport costs he had to pay to get his produce to the coast. By the construction of new metalled roads, which would stand up against the floods of the rainy season, access to most parts of Ceylon was greatly facilitated, and the saving in transport cost was sufficient to recoup the planter for what he had lost by the repeal of the preferential duty.

As a result new capital began to flow in from British investors and many new coffee plantations were started. English and Scotsmen came out to manage them either on their own account or as the employees of companies, while Tamil coolies were brought over

from Southern India to do the manual work. Their diet was largely made up of rice, and to supply them the rice fields of the island were largely extended, although their produce was insufficient to satisfy the demand. In consequence large amounts had to be imported from India, but these could readily be paid for by the rising exports of the colony. As the European planters introduced improved methods of agriculture, these were gradually adopted by native cultivators to their own profit, and so by the 'seventies there was a notable rise in the standard of living among the native population as a whole which was marked by increasing imports of Lancashire cottons and other manufactured goods. The rise both in exports and imports demanded an increase in transport facilities and Colombo became a very busy port. To accommodate the shipping, that used it not only for loading but also as a port of call on the routes to Bengal, Burma and Australia, the Government undertook great harbour works on the credit of the colonial revenues, which again demanded British machinery and the services of British engineers. The construction of a railway from Colombo to the ancient capital of Kandy high up in the mountains of the interior further reduced transport costs, and much new land was opened up that had previously been wild jungle.

Thus the general progress of the colony was promoted by the consistent policy of the local Government which was almost unknown in other plantation colonies. That policy was amply justified, for in the period between 1840 and 1880 Ceylon was provided with a network of admirably constructed metalled roads and railways which opened up the remotest parts of the colony. They paid the interest on the capital expended without adding to the burdens laid upon the taxpayers. As we have already remarked, such public works as these and the many irrigation schemes which were also undertaken brought a measure of prosperity not only to the white planters but also to the native cultivators who followed their improved methods. The standard of living rose and Ceylon provides an outstanding example of the benefits conferred by British rule upon a tropical dependency by the constructive methods of peaceful and consistent planning.

The progress of British interests in the East Indian Archipelago brought the United Kingdom into recurring difficulties with the

Dutch who had held a close monopoly of the trade of the region for two centuries. In the last years of the Napoleonic war, it will be remembered that we held Java, the principal Dutch colony, from 1810 till the peace of 1815. Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, its able Governor, was able during the occupation to learn the technical secrets of the trade of the Hollanders and he believed that Britain might well secure a large share of the commerce of the Archipelago by the adoption of more liberal methods than the rigid and exclusive regulations by which the Dutch strove to force all trade to pass through Batavia. It was a bitter disappointment to Raffles when under the compelling dictates of their European policy the Cabinet decided to return Java and the rest of the old Dutch possessions to the new Kingdom of Holland.

Raffles was determined, however, to retain some means of entry for British commerce into the jealously guarded Dutch preserve. Holland had never taken much interest in the Malay sultanates of the Peninsula which produced none of the valuable spices that formed the bulk of their trade. By persistent importunity Raffles succeeded in persuading the East India Company to permit him to acquire from the Sultan of Johore the deserted island of Singapore at the very tip of the Peninsula whose strategic situation seemed to his far-seeing eye ideally situated to command the entrance to the Straits of Malacca by which traders from Europe and India approached the islands of the Archipelago and the ports of China. The acquisition was completed in 1819 and when in 1824 an agreement was reached between Britain and Holland for the delimitation of their respective spheres, Singapore was left in British hands.

Generally speaking the treaty left all the eastern islands as an area in which the Dutch alone might establish control over the local sultans and thus reserve a monopoly of trade for themselves. In the west British traders were free to compete on equal terms, but we disclaimed any intention of seeking any exclusive influence over the rulers in the region. Apparently the Dutch were restored to as dominant a position in the Archipelago as they had possessed in the exclusive days of the Netherlands East India Company, but in reality a wide breach had been made in their monopoly and the way lay open for a rapid expansion of British commerce. The acquisition of Singapore and the treaty of 1824 were the foundation

stones of a new and most valuable addition to the British Empire. When it was signed the British flag flew only at Penang, Malacca and Singapore; fifty or sixty years later by a process of peaceful expansion without any exercise of military force the colonies and protectorates of the Straits Settlements were well on the way to prosperity and contentment and Singapore had become one of the most important centres in the East.

While it was steadily rising with the influx of many skilled and diligent Chinese merchants followed by a large immigration of hard-working coolies, British influence was extending in a new direction. In 1840 James Brooke, who had been in the East India Company's service but had left it to engage in enterprises of his own, assisted the Rajah of Sarawak on the north coast of Borneo to put down a rebellion and was entrusted with the management of the government. Brooke was a man of great ability who was much respected by the Malays and he was later adopted as the rajah's heir and succeeded him. Sarawak was not annexed to the Empire, but remained independent though closely associated with the Straits Settlements. In 1848 the small island of Labuan off the coast of North Borneo was acquired by treaty from the local sultan as a coaling station and this annexation aroused energetic protests from the Dutch who maintained that it was a breach of the agreement of 1824. But these protests were rejected by the British Government, for Labuan lay to the north of the line through Singapore which with certain specified exceptions had been laid down as the limit of Dutch exclusive influence, and the occupation persisted.

In the Malay Peninsula the territory was divided under the rule of many local Malay sultans who nominally owed allegiance to the King of Siam though he had no effective control over them. The East India Company was strongly opposed to any extension of their responsibilities in the region, which then had little to offer in the way of profitable trade. But their possession of the island of Penang and the small mainland area of Province Wellesley behind it forced them to pay more attention to the affairs of the Peninsula when the Siamese invaded the State of Kedah in the north from whose ruler the Company had purchased Penang. The Siamese also threatened to invade Perak and Selangor nearer to Singapore and had to be warned off by the British. Ultimately they were

forced to retire, and though Kedah was left under Siamese suzerainty, their further influence in the southern sultanates was destroyed and the sultans came to look to the British in the Straits Settlements for guidance. But the East India Company steadily refused to extend their responsibilities in the Peninsula and the sultans were left to their own resources and to carry on their governments as best they could.

One of the major evils in the anarchy that beset the Malays was the prevalence of piracy which was carried on with the connivance and often for the profit of the sultans. As the traffic through the Straits of Malacca grew steadily the evils of this piracy became unbearable and it proved impossible to suppress them merely by naval measures. The British Government was compelled to change its policy and to accept the responsibility of extending control over the Malay states which it had so long refused. In 1867 a protectorate was proclaimed over the states in the south of the Peninsula behind Singapore. The sultans had to permit British Residents to assist them in carrying on their government and to watch over their subjects and prevent assistance being afforded to pirates. With the establishment of the Protectorate the Malay States were started on a new era. The old conditions of anarchy and misrule were gradually cleared away and after 1870, as we shall describe in a later chapter, new industries came to improve the whole standard of life in Malaya. There were no dramatic episodes of conquest or military adventure but a gradual process of extending order and justice under the patient advice of the British Residents who worked through the traditional forms of the native institutions. Bit by bit the whole area was policed and justice done and what had been one of the most backward and poverty-stricken regions of the Far East was set on the high road to prosperity. As it progressed so more and more commerce flocked to the harbour and markets of Singapore, which was now one of the world's great trading centres and by 1870 outstripped Batavia, its great Dutch rival, in both wealth, volume of shipping and diversity of trade.

The last section of the dependencies to which we must direct our attention includes those in tropical Africa which down to the middle of the nineteenth century were confined to the West

Coast, for it was not until after that date that Britain had any territorial interests in East Africa. When our period begins the dependencies comprised the colony of Sierra Leone and what were called the "West African Settlements," i.e. the Gambia and certain forts and factories on the Gold Coast, of which the most important was Cape Coast Castle. They were in no sense settlements as we have used the term in speaking of the colonies of settlement. They had no settlers, but merely a handful of white mercantile employees and a few officials and soldiers surrounded by an overwhelming number of blacks. Sierra Leone since 1808, when the Company that had established it came to an end, was under the direct supervision of the Colonial Office, but the other dependencies were at the accession of Queen Victoria managed by a Committee of Merchants trading to Africa who received but a small Parliamentary grant to aid in maintaining the forts but had to defray the rest of the expenses out of their own pockets. Needless to say, their disbursements were kept to the lowest possible level and the officials were recruited from broken men who were willing to brave the deadly conditions of the coast for a pittance because they could find nothing else. Not only was West Africa justly called "the white man's grave," but the settlements were in constant danger from the menacing military power of the Ashantis of the interior. Only a few years before they had overwhelmed a British force and its native allies, and they were often threatening a new attack on the white men scattered along the coast.

The forts and factories were only held on sufferance by the payment of rent or tribute to the local chiefs and the British exercised no rights of sovereignty beyond the immediate neighbourhood. They were consequently at the mercy of the constant disputes and fighting that raged among the negro tribes surrounding them, while their trade now that the navy had suppressed all British slave-trading was precarious and unprofitable. Again and again the British Government announced its intention of retiring from the settlements and cutting down their responsibility in West Africa to the narrowly restricted limits of the colony of Sierra Leone and possibly the single fort of Cape Coast Castle. That this abandonment was never carried out was due in the main to the work of a single official, Captain George Maclean.

It was a turning-point in the history of British West Africa, not

because the Committee system was anything but an easy way of shirking government responsibility for the Cinderellas of the dependencies, but because it gave employment to a man who had a genius for dealing with the uncivilised African. George Maclean, a subaltern of the West India Regiment, took office as President in the Gold Coast settlements in 1830 and within the next nine years with no force at his back he acquired an immense influence on all the tribes within a wide area. By the exercise of tact and the common sense of natural justice he brought order out of the incessant welter of tribal quarrels and for the first time made the white men sufficiently respected to carry on their trade without interference and blackmail by the swarming blacks who surrounded them. British trade in the region rapidly increased and the African merchants began to make satisfactory profits for the first time since the abolition of the British slave trade in 1807, thirty years before.

Unfortunately, however, Maclean had little official authority and he carried out what he did with little reference either to the Governor of Sierra Leone, his nominal superior, or to the Colonial Office. He was quite unable to put a stop to the activities of the many foreign slave traders along the Coast or to suppress the domestic slavery which was fundamentally part of the negro social system. This utterly condemned him in the eyes of the humanitarians. Many of those who occupied the factories were none too particular in their dealings with the slave traders who were still very active along the coast. Maclean scrupulously prevented any actual slaving from the British factories, but it was impossible for him to prevent some of the more unscrupulous English in the forts from doing business in supplying goods to the slave ships through foreign agents. Nor could Maclean suppress the domestic slavery among the negro tribes which was ingrained in native custom. The news of these things roused the philanthropists of Exeter Hall to fury when Maclean's detractors brought them to England. The House of Commons in 1842 was moved to undertake a full investigation of the affairs of the Gold Coast and what Maclean had been doing during his twelve or fourteen years of government. Their Committee's report admitted the anomalous legal position but absolved Maclean from the charges that had been brought against him and gave him credit for his services to

trade. He was continued in his office and before his death from dysentery on the Coast in 1847 he was able to carry into effect one of the most important recommendations of the Committee which has been of permanent importance in our colonial government.

Both on the Gold Coast and in Sierra Leone the territory in which the British exercised direct authority was surrounded by native tribes and to them wrongdoers fled when police action was taken against them. From their places of refuge, too, they attempted to stir up unrest and insurrection in the colony and to quell this it was necessary for British forces to pursue them beyond our borders. This had no legal sanction and as an act of war it might lead to that extension of our territories and responsibilities to which the Colonial Office was unalterably opposed. A new precedent had therefore to be laid down and Parliament passed Foreign Jurisdiction Acts authorising the Crown by Order-in-Council to exercise power beyond our annexed territory just as if the region had been obtained by cession or conquest. This extra-territorial jurisdiction was really the legalising of what Maclean had been doing on the Gold Coast, but it was not until after his death that it was decided that it should only be exercised in regions where the local chiefs had consented to it by treaty. In the years between 1850 and 1860 many such treaties were concluded by which the chiefs promised to prohibit the slave trade in their territories and to permit the exercise of our powers under the Foreign Jurisdiction Acts. The British Government expressly disclaimed any intention of interfering with the government of the tribes or giving any promise to aid them against their enemies. But there were here the rudimentary beginnings of African protectorates and vague rights were mapped in regions where such treaties were concluded that proved of very great importance when the spheres of influence of the European Powers came to be delimited in the 'seventies and 'eighties.

The other important root of African progress arose in a different direction. When the philanthropists of Exeter Hall fully realised in 1840 the failure of all the efforts of thirty years to put down the evils of the trade which destroyed all hopes of civilising the African they turned in two other directions, the sending out of missionaries to preach the Gospel and bring civilising influences to bear and secondly promoting legitimate trade in new products

in regions where Europeans had not previously entered. The favourite area for these new efforts was on the Lower Niger and the product desired was especially cotton. The expedition which was promoted with a great flourish of trumpets by Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton and sent out to the Niger in 1842 has already been referred to. It was a tragic failure and the efforts to open up the Dark Continent by the loudly advertised methods of Exeter Hall received a check from which they never recovered.

The significant step forward on the Niger was taken by a merchant Macgregor Laird about the same time when he financed and sent out steamships to seek trade on the lower reaches of the river. He also encouraged the trade in palm oil in the many creeks of the Niger delta which hence became known as the Oil Rivers. But it was only his personal inspiration that kept the enterprise going and on his death in 1861 the merchants who were engaged in them fell apart and the way lay open for the opponents in Parliament of any British connection with West Africa on the ground of expense to have their way.

In 1865 a Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to survey the whole results of British rule in West Africa with the preconceived notion of recommending its cessation and the abandonment of the settlements which were such a constant drain on the Exchequer. But when the Committee went into the question fully in the light of evidence from the Coast it was clearly proved that we were already far too deeply committed by our treaties with native chiefs to contemplate their abandonment. All that could be done was to concentrate our commitments and refuse to extend them further. The old system was reverted to by which the whole of the British settlements in West Africa, which now included Lagos near the Oil Rivers as well as the Gold Coast, were placed under a single government whose seat was to be at Sierra Leone. This scheme was introduced by theorists who preferred a scheme that was shapely on paper to one that took local circumstances into account. It was impracticable from the first, for the conditions of Sierra Leone were so different from those on the Gold Coast and in Lagos and the Governor was so rarely able to visit those distant sections of his government that things went rapidly from bad to worse. Only by the devoted exertions of the officials on the spot were the settlements saved from chaos and

anarchy and any remnants of trade preserved. In 1870 we may say that West Africa was the Cinderella of the colonies constantly demanding the expenditure of money and lives and returning little or nothing in the way of trade or credit. Duty and British prestige forbade its abandonment but none but a few realised what important seeds had been planted and how they would grow to a widespread African empire within the next few years. When our period opened Britain was responsible only for the government of a few thousand Africans in Sierra Leone ; when the century ended she ruled over many millions of negroes. The lessons that prepared her for the task were learned in the depressing years before 1870 and precedents that were then laid down affected not only her own policy but that of every nation that had to govern primitive peoples.

CHAPTER XI

SOUTH AFRICA IN TRANSITION, 1854-84

WHILE the problems of the relations of white men with the native tribes of West Africa were generally unknown to the British public and were worked out by the men on the spot with little help or interference, the kindred problems of South Africa were often a subject of acute public controversy. About the middle of the century there seems to have been only one common element in the policy of the Colonial Office towards problems that would appear to be closely related. If our colonial policy had been governed by theory, similar methods would probably have been adopted in both cases. But it illustrates the way in which the Colonial Office dealt with each area by itself if we note that the only common element of policy was the determination of every successive Cabinet, to whatever party it belonged, to avoid any extension of British territory or assumption of fresh responsibilities.

We have shown how in West Africa this determination led to repeated attempts to cut down our commitments, while in South Africa it brought about the withdrawal of British control from the Transvaal in 1852 and from the Orange Free State in 1854. An essential difficulty was thus introduced into the history of the sub-continent. Thenceforward two widely different lines of action were pursued in the fundamental question of the relation of the whites to the swarming and warlike negro tribes who surrounded them. To the Boer farmers of the Transvaal and the Free State the tribes on their borders were dangerous enemies who must be thrust back from any lands that were worth occupying by their herds; if the needs of the negroes for grazing ground for their own cattle were thus made so acute as to urge them on to attack the newcomers, this led to a sporadic war of raids and counter-raids and created unrest that spread far beyond the locality where the troubles began. The negroes who remained behind on the lands that were annexed by the Boers were reduced to a condition of serfdom and made to labour for the interests of their masters under subjection. To the British Governors of Cape Colony, however, the tribes were the owners in full sovereignty of the lands they

occupied and their rights must be recognised and recorded in hard and fast written treaties, a requirement that led to endless trouble, since exact legal boundaries were unknown in the primitive wilds of the veld. In all the struggles of this confused period, therefore, it seemed to the Boers that the British always took the side of the savages and were opposed to those who were advancing the frontier of civilisation. The attitude of the colonial Governments to the negroes dwelling within their own borders, too, was different. The missionaries, who at an earlier period had had an undue influence in the shaping of policy, were no longer consulted in the political sphere, but their humanitarian ideas were still powerful in guiding British public opinion. To them the negro was a man and a brother, and they believed that by converting him to Christianity and then imparting to him some rudiments of education they were setting him on the high road to equality with the white man. Such ideas were anathema to the Boers who believed that there was an impassable gulf between black and white. Each must have his rights, but those of the negro were radically different from those of the white man; their relation fundamentally must be that of master and servant when they lived side by side, complete segregation when the negroes were still in the tribal stage. There was much to be said for each point of view, but unfortunately neither side could appreciate the outlook of the other in this period of transition, and native questions seriously embittered the relations between the Afrikaners and the British officials who were responsible for the colonial government.

The problem of the de-tribalised natives living directly under British administration was not so controversial as it had been. Their relations with the white man were governed by regulations worked out for the Hottentots twenty-five years before when there were very few Kaffirs within Cape Colony. Their status of legal equality had been recognised, and so when a liberal representative constitution was established for the colony in 1853 the coloured people, whether half-breeds, Hottentots or negroes, who could satisfy the necessary conditions were eligible for the franchise like men of European stock. This was the celebrated provision of the Cape franchise which was to be so important a matter of debate half a century later in the National Convention that worked out the constitution of the Union.

It was upon the borders and beyond that the really fundamental questions presented themselves in all their difficulty. In 1852-4 the British Government, driven to desperation by the intractability of South Africa's affairs, had washed their hands, as they thought, of the most troublesome of them and left the trekkers alone in their remote wilds. But in thus withdrawing they were attempting the impossible by trying to divorce one part of an indissoluble whole from another. They were piling up for their successors far more troublesome problems than had yet been solved in the colonies and entering upon a transition period in South African history which brought its affairs into the forefront of Imperial politics.

The grant of representative government to Cape Colony in 1853 increased the difficulties in a way that was unknown in the other colonies of settlement. The Governor was also High Commissioner and had to devote more and more of his attention to affairs beyond the borders of the directly administered colony. In those matters the colonists had no say, though in many instances they were directly interested, for they had relatives and friends in the new Boer republics, and probably they had as much or more information about the actions and policy of the Governments there than was available to the British officials. That information was naturally coloured by republican sentiment, so that in the greater affairs of South Africa there was a radical divergence of view between the Dutch-speaking colonists and those who were responsible for the direction of Imperial policy. On the other hand the colonial legislatures were thrust back to a narrow parochial standpoint where they wrangled over purely local affairs. They had no right to debate the broader issues that were common to what was in reality a single South African community, whether men lived within Cape Colony or beyond the Orange and the Vaal. The boundaries of that community now stretched far into the remote interior where the exploring ardour of David Livingstone was revealing to civilisation the vast extent of lands up to the Zambesi, where the sub-continent merges into the darkness of Central Africa. Decisions on vital matters of policy might affect the fortunes of everyone there from the border of Portuguese East Africa right down to the shores of Table Bay, but there could be no orderly debate upon them in a competent legislative assem-

bly. It was no wonder that the best minds in the colony felt thwarted and that critics of the policy pursued were left with a rankling sense of grievance against the harassed Imperial Government and its executive agents, the Colonial Office and the Governors. That sense of grievance on the one hand and the sympathy of the average Afrikaner for the policies of the republics on the other were to play essential parts in South African history during the transition period—with unfortunate and lasting results.

In the second half of the nineteenth century there were three major negro confederacies on the immediate borders of the white settlements. Each owned the supremacy of a "Great Chief" who ruled over a group of allied tribes and commanded their fighting men who would oppose further white encroachments or attempt to secure the return to them of lands that had been taken from the tribes. These warriors were disciplined and well organised and, though they were ill-armed by European standards, they might be very dangerous. The most formidable were the Zulus to the north-east of Natal and on the southern flank of the Transvaal. Under the successors of Chaka their well-drilled impis of young braves were always itching to resume his conquests and their restlessness was a constant source of danger to Natal and the Transvaal alike.

The second group of tribes were the Basutos who had been expelled by the Free Staters from the good cattle-rearing districts they had enjoyed and pushed back into the mountains where they were badly pressed for room. Amid the stony uplands they could find little pasture for the cattle on which they depended for subsistence and want drove them to constant raids against the Boer farmers to the west of them. Each raid was followed by a primitive counter-raid and the incessant unrest had repercussions all through the Free State and down to the borders of Cape Colony. For all the twenty years between 1854 and 1874 the Basuto question was in the forefront of South African problems and the name of the great Basuto chief Moshesh was constantly in the news. The High Commissioner was bound to keep a close watch on the relations between the Basutos and the Free Staters, for at any moment the outbreak of serious war might set the whole border aflame.

The third group of tribes, the Bechuanas, were mainly concerned

with the Transvaalers. The lands on which they pastured their cattle stretched along the ancient track, called the "Missionaries' Road" to the north along which Livingstone had marched to his discovery of the Zambesi. The country was semi-arid with good grass only around sparsely scattered *fontains* or water-holes and the conditions rapidly deteriorated to the west until they became those of a waterless desert. The interests of the Bechuana were therefore spread out from south to north roughly from the borders of Cape Colony to the remote interior. This fact had a definite influence on their history when relations with them came into the forefront of politics in the 'eighties.

The details of events on the Basuto border need not concern us, but there was one consequence of them that is of importance to imperial history. They led to the first attempt to reverse the fatal steps of 1852-4 and to federate the Boer Republics and the British colonies so that they might pursue a common policy with regard to the tribes. This was the work of the celebrated Governor, Sir George Grey. Immediately after the British forces had been withdrawn from the Free State in accordance with the Convention of Bloemfontein it was determined that a new Governor of Cape Colony must be ordered to carry out the restrictive policy on which the Government had decided—no interference in native disputes and no extension of colonial frontiers. Within those frontiers there were the difficult problems of the Kaffir tribes to be settled, and to cope with them had baffled a long succession of Governors. Grey was chosen because of the reputation of understanding the native mind which he had won in his successful dealings with the Maoris in New Zealand. In South Australia and New Zealand alike he had shown an independence of judgment and constructive readiness to undertake responsibility that were unusual in the Colonial Service. The Government with all the troubles of the Crimean War on their hands did not want to be bothered with South Africa and so they conceded to Grey a somewhat freer hand than his immediate predecessors had had.

Before he arrived at Cape Town in December 1854 Grey had read up all that he could find about South African conditions and he seems to have made up his mind on his policy, at any rate in regard to the Kaffirs on the Eastern Frontier. Where it had been planned to segregate the tribes from Europeans and to keep

them in a great reserve from which all white colonists should be excluded, Grey entirely reversed this decision and strove to encourage the complete dissolution of the Kaffir tribal system and the assimilation of white and black on a footing of equality. The Government allowed him a free hand and out of a seriously depleted treasury they even consented to find money to carry out his ambitious schemes. It is important to remember this as a corrective to the usual accusation that the Colonial Office starved and thwarted Grey at every turn.

The Governor saw that to ensure the smooth working of his plans in Kaffraria peace must be maintained between the Basutos and the Free Staters and from the beginning therefore he strove to mediate in the questions of disputed lands. But though Moshesh gave promises of good behaviour, he did not keep to them but did his best to deprive the Boers of help from the colony by stirring up discontent among the Kaffirs against the new plans for their improvement. The realisation of what was going on confirmed Grey in the opinion he had already formed that the problems of South Africa were one and that the policy of severely limited liability which he had been expressly sent out to carry into effect was wrong. In despatches to the Colonial Secretary he vigorously denounced the Conventions and asked for power to modify them and for greater liberty of action in dealing with the republics. To this demand the British Government returned a firm refusal. Grey was told that he must strictly respect the Conventions which guaranteed the Boers from British interference and that he must scrupulously preserve neutrality in their troubles with the tribes. Thus at the beginning of 1857, when the difficulties on the Basuto border were rapidly getting worse, the Governor had been told unmistakably that he would not be granted the free hand for which he asked and that he must confine himself to his proper business, the government of Cape Colony and Natal.

Meanwhile the ambitious and impulsive President of the Transvaal, Marthinus Pretorius, was striving to unite the two republics under his own control, although he had entirely failed to establish order in the anarchic conditions that prevailed northward from the Vaal into the distant interior. Pretorius could not control the lawless elements among his own Boers and they were continually gnawing at the native territories on their borders and

thus exciting perpetual unrest among the Zulus, the Basutos and the far-northern tribes alike. The great majority of the Free Staters detested Pretorius and his dangerous ambitions and their more responsible leaders desired therefore to draw nearer to their fellows in Cape Colony and to secure their help in the menacing dangers that confronted them.

In 1858 the troubles on the border between the Basutos and the Free State culminated in open war and Moshesh's raiding parties rapidly overran the Boer farms in the disputed lands along the frontier. Grey would not permit British subjects from Cape Colony to go to the aid of the scattered commandos, and in despair the President of the Free State turned to the Transvaal for an alliance. But this would have precipitated the very danger the Governor wished to avert, the spreading of the war to the Zulus and along the whole eastern borders. He therefore firmly forbade the conclusion of any alliance by a threat to abrogate the Convention of Bloemfontein and brought pressure to bear upon the victorious Moshesh to compel him to grant favourable terms. These two actions persuaded the Free Staters that the best course for their safety was to come to an agreement with Cape Colony, and their overtures afforded Grey the opportunity he had long desired of pressing on the Home Government the idea of a federation of all the white communities in South Africa which he set out in a despatch to the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Labouchere. "Nothing but a strong federal government," he wrote, "which unites within itself all the European races in South Africa can permanently maintain peace in this country and free Great Britain from constant anxiety for the peace of her possessions here."

Before a reply could be sent to this important proposal Labouchere had been replaced as Colonial Secretary by Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, charged with a determination to reduce the expenditure of British funds in South Africa and to pursue a policy of rigid economy. To accomplish this Lytton proposed to merge Cape Colony, British Kaffraria and Natal under a single supreme administration which should mainly be dependent upon local taxation as in the other colonies of settlement under the Crown. Grey's comments upon this proposal were invited, but he was expressly directed to take no steps to carry it into effect without preliminary reference to the Colonial Office. The Governor,

however, seized the opportunity to draw up an elaborate despatch setting out a much wider scheme for the federation of all the South African communities, and, before it could be considered by the Colonial Secretary, he brought before the Cape Parliament a resolution in favour of federation which he had received from the Free State. This was clearly an act of disobedience to the express orders that had been given and the inevitable result followed. Sir George Grey was summarily recalled by Lytton in 1859, and, though he was restored to the Governorship by his successor, the Duke of Newcastle, in the following year, his great ideas for federation were eclipsed and British administration in the South African colonies passed into a period of localised ineffectiveness which lasted for more than ten years before some wider ideas could make their way again after 1871.

The defeat of Grey's bold conception was neither due to incompetence nor tyranny on the part of the Imperial Government. The actual circumstances which led to his recall were brought about by his own impatience in disregarding express orders from superior authority and his neglect of the fact that, however great and well designed his schemes were, they must fit into the broader framework of Imperial policy, since the British taxpayer would certainly be called upon to finance them.

British ministers had shown in North America, Australia and New Zealand alike that they were entirely anxious to promote self-government and ministerial responsibility to the electorates when it was probable that the colonies could carry the burden of government on their own resources. But the South African communities could not satisfy this essential condition, even in their own local defence problems, let alone in a vastly dispersed federation. Even Cape Colony, the most advanced and well-settled community, was constantly applying for British regiments to be sent to guard the frontier, though her farmers could not pay sufficient taxes to defray the cost and the Imperial Government was left to extract the money from a very critical and unwilling House of Commons. The Cape could hardly provide the cost of its own administration or pay for the extension of its own communications by road and railway which were essential to any further development. Much more would its taxpayers be unable to contribute towards the charges of government in the bankrupt and scattered republics

which were separated from it by vast distances over which there was nothing but the most primitive form of transport. Only very heavy imperial expenditure for many years could have overcome these material difficulties, and it was this fact that made it impossible for the Imperial Government to accept Grey's far-reaching plans. For many years to come each of the South African communities concerned itself only with its own local problems and the supreme question of the sub-continent had to wait.

When Sir George Grey was transferred from South Africa to New Zealand in 1861 to cope with the difficulties of a new Maori war he was succeeded by Sir Philip Wodehouse. Cape Colony was falling into eight years of the worst depression in its history induced by the Civil War in America, and the loss of the markets for its wool on which the prosperity of the colony depended. The Colonial Office was now prepared to allow both the Cape and Natal to extend their borders over the neighbouring tribes, provided that they would assume the responsibility for their administration and defence, but for this the great majority of the colonists were unwilling. They demanded the same rights to manage their own affairs that the other self-governing colonies had achieved and in these demands they were supported by many Liberal statesmen in England on purely theoretical grounds without realising the essential difference of the circumstances. Wodehouse, on the other hand, who had learned his experience in Crown colonies, believed that what was needed was good government and sound defences, and this divergence of view led to his extreme unpopularity and a prolonged constitutional deadlock into the detailed story of which it is unnecessary for us to enter. Besides the demand for responsible government by a party under the leadership of J. C. Molteno there was bitter controversy going on between the two parts of the colony. The Eastern Province round Grahamstown was largely inhabited by men of English stock, while the West was predominantly Afrikaner. The East complained of the unjust share of the West in the funds appropriated for development and demanded the separation of Cape Colony into two provinces, each of which should be charged solely with the expenses of its own administration. Wodehouse was strongly opposed to this separation, for he realised, as the Colonial Office was coming to do, that Grey had been right and

that only the union of all the British territories in South Africa under one powerful Government could promote the solution of their problems.

He asked that the Governor and High Commissioner should be entrusted with much ampler powers than he had under the system of representative government by which the raising of taxes was left entirely to a legislative Assembly whose animosity to the Governor made them refuse him supplies even for the most necessary expenditure. Wodehouse believed that the right system to adopt for a time was not responsible government but its opposite, the type of administration that recently had had to be applied to the West Indies wherein the effective power in every case lay in the hands of the Governor. Britain was the paramount power in South Africa and the British Government should not hesitate to claim the right to adopt any measures which were forced upon them by the anarchy in the republics and the unrest it provoked among the native tribes.

The Gladstone Cabinet was unlikely to apply to South Africa such a drastic solution as had been necessary in Jamaica. However rightly Wodehouse might point to the threatening danger on the frontiers, there was undoubtedly in Cape Colony proper a really compact white community capable of exercising political functions as in the other colonies of settlement. In their demand for similar privileges of responsible government they could rely on support from their Radical friends in the House of Commons and this brought South African affairs into British party politics. Some Conservatives believed with the Governor that what was needed was strong government and some restriction of the obstructive powers of the representative Assembly. Advanced Liberals, however, believed that they had a peculiar virtue as the guardians of the policy of granting self-government to the colonies, though in reality it had evolved quite independently of party politics. They were ready to apply it as an infallible panacea without reference to surrounding circumstances and they accused the Governor and those who supported him of a liking for autocracy. Thus for the first time South African questions began to appear in British party politics in the late 'sixties with momentous consequences for the future. There was no similar division of party opinion about the advisability of promoting federation, and

after the successful achievement of Canadian confederation in 1867 the idea came prominently forward in the thoughts of British statesmen of both parties.

Meanwhile things were gradually shaping themselves in the Boer Republics. The Free Staters, as we have seen, had first tried to get help against their enemies, the Basutos, from the Cape, but, when that was refused, they were driven back upon the Transvaal and for a time the two republics were united under the single rule of Marthinus Pretorius. But he launched out into such ambitious and ill-considered schemes as to alarm the cautious Free State farmers and he was compelled to return to the Transvaal where he maintained himself in power by the shrewd aid of one of the youngest of the original trekkers, Paul Kruger. Pretorius proclaimed the annexation of vast areas to the South African Republic stretching into the far interior where gold had recently been discovered and down to the sea at Delagoa Bay to the disregard of Portuguese and British rights alike, though he had neither the means nor the skill to carry out such grandiose designs. Governor Wodehouse at once refused to recognise the annexations which would have closed the road to the north, and Natal clamoured for the removal of the danger to peace by the expulsion of Pretorius and the occupation of the Transvaal by British forces. The principal advocate of this idea was Theophilus Shepstone who was to play so important a part a few years later.

Down to 1870 if shrewd observers were asked why the British were in South Africa at all, the answer would certainly be that it was due to the strategic importance of the harbours of Cape Town and Port Natal on the route to India. But just at the moment when that reason seemed to be weakened by the opening of the route *via* the Suez Canal, a new magnet appeared to draw men to the Cape just as gold had attracted them to Australia during the 'fifties.

Between 1858 and 1868, when Basutoland was finally annexed, the storm centre of the frontier had been in that territory which touches both Cape Colony, the Free State and Natal, but now the interest shifted further west to the arid region where the Missionaries' Road passed as the only practicable route into the interior for missionaries and traders alike. The territory immediately beyond the colonial border was called Griqualand West because in

the disputes of thirty years before it had been assigned to the Griquas, a people of mixed blood under their chiefs of whom in the late 'sixties Adam Kok and Waterboer were the most important. Most of them had moved away and farmers had come in from the Free State to take their lands. Land speculators were striving to purchase the remaining lands of the chiefs when in 1868 a momentous discovery was made on the Vaal that brought Griqualand West into the forefront of politics. Diamonds of first-rate quality were found in the river gravels and later the source from which they came was discovered away to the north in the lands that had so long been in dispute.

By 1870 the news of the discoveries had spread abroad and miners were flocking to the diamond diggings where they lived in disorderly camps without any official control. The question of jurisdiction in the disputed lands became acute, for both Pretorius from the Transvaal and President Brand of the Free State were proposing to send forces into the camps to keep order and collect mining dues. The diggers were up in arms and, while some of them wished for an independent diggers' republic, the more responsible of them appealed to the High Commissioner for a British police force to keep order and withstand the conspiracy between the Transvaal and the Free State whom they suspected of a determination to seize the valuable prize for their own selfish interests. The Cape Government was bound to take action in the face of such threats to peace and the ousting of the Griquas from the long-standing rights that they and their supporters claimed. There were already by the spring of 1871 more than ten thousand diggers on the fields and the situation was getting more dangerous month by month.

The Free State demanded the arbitration of a foreign power in the dispute, but the British Government would listen to nothing of the kind, for it would be an infringement of our paramountcy in South Africa and was impossible of acceptance. President Brand could not use force to support his demands, for the Free State was completely exhausted by its long struggles with the Basutos. It was the fatal policy of the Conventions that had brought about the possibility of such a dangerous demand, and despite their difficulties in face of the victory of an aggressive Germany in Europe, the Liberal Cabinet were bound to with-

stand it and accept fresh responsibilities. After various complicated negotiations the question of the disputed lands was referred with Brand's consent to Lieutenant-Governor Keate of Natal.

Before this, however, it had become clear to Lord Kimberley, who was now the Colonial Secretary in Gladstone's Cabinet, that only British power could handle so large and turbulent a community of so many diverse origins as had now gathered at the diggings. He indicated privately to the Governor of Cape Colony, Sir Henry Barkly, that the Cabinet would consent to the annexation of the diamond fields and would place their administration and defence in the hands of the colony. This was recognised at the Cape as generally in accord with the policy of the Imperial Government to place the burden of maintaining order on their frontiers in the hands of the colonists themselves as an essential task of the self-government that under Molteno's lead they were so insistently demanding. The legislature accepted the annexation of Basutoland without much hesitation, though it was noted as a significant abandonment of the earlier policy of the Colonial Office to avoid extending British territory. But as to the propriety of annexing the diamond fields there was a great difference of opinion because upon it certainly depended the possibility of federation.

President Brand was in principle in favour of federation, to be able to deal with native questions on a common basis, but he definitely told Barkly that he would take no steps while the claims of the Free State on the diamond fields were undecided. But Barkly would not wait, and immediately after the publication of the Keate Award which rejected the Free State claims and decided in favour of the Griquas, he proclaimed the annexation of the disputed territory (Oct. 1871). This bitterly antagonised not only the republics, who protested that it was an unjust exercise against them of superior force, but split public opinion in Cape Colony into two halves along racial lines. All hope of federation by agreement was at an end, for the Afrikaners who deeply sympathised with their relatives in the republics were convinced by Barkly's abrupt action that the good faith of the Imperial Government could not be trusted and that they were aiming at the domination of the English-speaking element in South Africa. They made unworthy accusations that the Imperial Government had been

swayed by the influence of capitalists who wished to secure the wealth that the diamond fields were now beginning to turn out in an ever-growing stream, and they thus aroused suspicions among the Dutch-speaking population that were to poison South African politics for more than a generation. It is for this reason that we have dealt with the question at such length, for the annexation marked a turning point in South Africa's period of transition and the feelings that it aroused coloured all the essential movements in its history for many years. The suspicions also influenced many British Radicals and fanned their tendency to make sympathy with the Boers of the republics a matter of party politics in Great Britain.

Barkly's pressing-on of the measure for responsible government in Cape Colony did nothing to repair the harm that had been done. The measure became law in 1872 and the Cape Colonists thus obtained equal powers with their fellows in Canada, Australia and New Zealand. But their powers were confined within their own borders and they were thus encouraged further in a narrow parochialism. Everything beyond Cape Colony remained in the hands of the High Commissioner under the direction of the Imperial Government, and when the politicians of the Cape concerned themselves with general South African questions it was usually as critics of what the Imperial Government was doing and sympathisers with the republics and the opposing policies they so often promoted.

In the republics anti-British sentiment was encouraged by the rise of a new nationalism which proclaimed the slogan "Africa for the Afrikaners" and regarded all men of British stock with hostile dislike. For co-operation for the good of a single South African community dis-union had been substituted, and the events of the next thirty years were to show what grave dangers that disunion brought in its train.

For the natives, too, the opening of the diamond fields brought great and dangerous changes. In earlier years the tribes had been self-contained and only a few fugitives had found their way into the white man's lands to labour on his farms and they did not as a rule return to bring his vices to the kraals. But after the opening of the diamond fields there was an ever-growing demand for native labour which could only be filled by recruiting young men

from the tribes. In the lawless mining camps they earned good wages in money such as they had never known before. With those wages it was their fondest desire to buy guns to carry back to their tribe and thus the predatory chieftains of the great confederacies had no longer to rely on the spears of their impis but could attack their enemies with the deadly weapons of the white man. On the social side, too, the traditional sanctions of tribal morality were broken down to be replaced with nothing that could guard against the vices that the returning labourers had acquired at the diggings.

Changes were set on foot that produced fundamental effects upon aboriginal society, and though in the 'seventies they attracted little attention as compared with the political disputes of the white men, in reality their influence on the future was at least as great.

During the later years of Gladstone's first ministry South African affairs passed into the background, though there were occasional debates on them in the House of Commons. With the advent of the Disraeli Cabinet in 1874, however, there was a change, for the most convinced of all apostles of the federal idea took the Colonial Secretaryship. As Under-Secretary Carnarvon had opposed Grey's grandiose schemes, as he called them, but since then he had been, as he thought, the prime architect of Canadian confederation and he had become an enthusiast for applying the plan elsewhere. Newcastle and Kimberley had seen that to have any likelihood of success any federation scheme must spring from South African initiative, but Carnarvon was too impatient to wait. In the spring of 1875 in consequence of renewed native unrest he summoned a conference of the various states in South Africa to meet and try to work out common measures of native policy. The Transvaal, the Free State and Natal were willing to send delegates, but the Cape Ministry of Molteno made objections possibly because they felt that their new rights of responsible government were being impaired. To advise him upon circumstances in South Africa the Colonial Secretary took the very injudicious step of sending out unofficially James Anthony Froude who had had no governmental experience and completely lacked political judgment. This was a distinct snub to the Governor and High Commissioner whose responsibility it was to give the Colonial Office balanced reports of what took place

in the colonies and states. But it was more resented by the Cape Ministry, for Froude embarked on a speech-making campaign to promote the federation idea and made many blunders both of taste and judgment. The Cape therefore refused to send delegates to the conference as did the Transvaal when Carnarvon removed its sittings from South Africa to London in 1876. The whole incident was a lamentable fiasco and only deserves remembrance here from the harm it did by deepening the divisions in South Africa and the conviction that the Imperial Government cared little or nothing for colonial opinion. To compensate for the memories of supercilious failure in knowledge and understanding of some officials in Downing Street, which the colonial delegates carried back to South Africa after weeks of irritation in London, there was nothing to show but a Permissive Federation Act which Carnarvon passed through Parliament in 1877 and with which the colonies would have nothing to do. It was an unfortunate episode all through, but worse was to come.

From the beginning when the voor-trekkers had first scattered into the wilds, the Transvaal had been a scene of disunity and lack of government. On paper the South African Republic had a constitution, but in reality the power of enforcing the decisions of the elected Volksraad was lacking. Each locality concerned itself only with its own affairs and the Boer farmers tried to keep aloof from each other and from any governmental control. The few English-speaking traders carried on their business, which often included the unregulated arms traffic with the natives, regardless of restrictions, while the tribes also went their own way and were often engaged in cattle raids and counter-raids on the lands of other tribes and on the Boer farms. This state of anarchy had dangerous repercussions on the frontiers and especially on the Zulus who were neighbours both of the Transvaalers and of Natal. The expert adviser of the Colonial Office on native questions in Zululand and Natal was Theophilus Shepstone, the son of a missionary who had been brought up among the Zulus and knew their problems intimately. He was convinced that there was no possibility of averting danger to Natal from their warlike chief Cetewayo so long as anarchy prevailed in the Transvaal, and he represented to the High Commissioner and to Lord Carnarvon at the time of the London Conference that the only remedy lay in

annexing the Transvaal and establishing order there by a small British force. The old withdrawal policy of the Sand River Convention had now completely gone by the board, and Carnarvon leaned to the opposite extreme and was quite ready to accept fresh responsibilities if they would further his dearly-cherished federation schemes. Shepstone had represented that annexation would be acceptable to the Boers because it would assure them of help against Zulu invasion, and he was able to secure from Carnarvon permission to take action if he were generally supported by Boer opinion.

It was not only with the Zulus on their south-eastern borders that the Boers were in trouble. The commandos that they sent against them were defeated, while in the north they were also involved in unsuccessful and bloody struggles with smaller tribes. The Bechuanas in the west were complaining to the High Commissioner at the Cape that they were suffering from the incursions of trekkers from the Transvaal who were trying to seize their best lands along the Missionaries' Road. Even the Matabele tribes far to the north were being disturbed by incursions of the Transvaalers. Carnarvon was convinced that South Africa was threatened with grave dangers from this anarchy, and it was to avert it that he gave Shepstone conditional permission to proclaim the annexation. But Shepstone was not prepared to wait for definite orders, and in 1877 he took precipitate action without fulfilling the requisite condition of securing general acquiescence from the Boers.

Just at this moment there was a change in the High Commissionership and Sir Bartle Frere arrived to take up the office. He was a man of great ability and judgment and had won a very high reputation in India for his skill and tact as a Governor, but he came to South Africa at a time when everything seemed to have gone to pieces and grave disasters threatened. Carnarvon sent Frere to the Cape with orders to press on federation under the terms of the Permissive scheme, but he arrived to find anything of the sort impossible. Shepstone's annexation of the Transvaal, for which Carnarvon was undoubtedly responsible though he had not authorised the actual moment of its proclamation, was greeted by the Boers with very divided opinions despite the desperate position they were in. Paul Kruger, the ablest man in the country,

stood aside and the old trekker hostility to all outside interference gathered round him in swelling force. Unfortunately, in place of a conciliatory and tactful spirit many of the British officials and soldiers, who came in to establish the new government, showed a liking for formality and red-tape that was quite inconsistent with pioneering conditions, and irritation and misunderstandings marked the course of the administration from the beginning.

The news of the annexation and of Carnarvon's pressing of the federation scheme produced most unfortunate effects elsewhere. The Free Staters recalled their grievances over the annexation of the diamond fields and the Cape Dutch believed that Shepstone's action had been prompted by a secret British policy to oust them from political rights and reduce them to the level of a subject people. The encouragement given to feelings such as these was particularly unfortunate at a moment when an Afrikaner national movement was beginning to take its rise, first as a cultural effort to promote the study and use of Afrikaans as a literary language but later for the encouragement of separatist ideas that Africa belonged only to the Afrikaners and that all English-speakers were intruders. These movements were still only in germ, but they already showed that they had very dangerous possibilities.

Sir Bartle Frere with his long Indian training and experience naturally looked at South African affairs from a somewhat different angle to that of his immediate predecessors who had come to the Governorship of the Cape through other colonies of settlement. His interest lay in the work of the High Commissionership not in the local politics of a self-governing colony and a somewhat quarrelsome legislative Assembly. Looking at the whole sub-continent he saw the greatest and most immediate danger in the organised military power of the Zulus under their aggressive chief, Cetewayo. He was certain that they must be treated with justice, but also with a very firm hand as the predatory princes of India had been dealt with fifty years before. Therefore he first took up the question of the Zulu boundary disputes with the Transvaal. After a very careful examination of the case of both sides he gave his award in 1878, which was generally regarded as just, though it accepted much of the Zulu case. But in the matter of the Zulu impi Frere would have no mercy. He demanded peremptorily that Cetewayo should disband his army, deliver up

his arms and place himself under British protection. They were demands in strict accordance with Indian precedent and show that Frere worthily belonged to the line of Governors like the Lawrences who had pacified Northern India twenty or thirty years before. When Cetewayo refused the demands in the early part of 1879 British forces were sent into Zululand from three directions. The war was short but very damaging to British prestige. There were individual acts of heroism, but organisation and staff work were lamentably defective. The overwhelming and slaughter of a considerable British force and its native auxiliaries at Isandhlwana damaged the prestige of all white men in the eyes of the natives and some of the Basutos rose in insurrection. Panic swept Natal which was only saved from Zulu invasion by the heroic defence of Rorke's Drift and, though Cetewayo's power was utterly broken at Ulundi in July 1879, stories of incompetence and bungling spread everywhere through South Africa. The tragic death of the young Prince Imperial, the last heir of the direct Napoleonic line, created a painful sensation in Europe and the Liberal party were furnished with abundant ammunition for their attacks on the "imperialism" of the Conservatives. A General Election was imminent and Frere's anti-Zulu policy and Shepstone's annexation of the Transvaal were seized upon for party purposes as no colonial matters had been used for a century.

In the speeches of his great Midlothian campaign Gladstone stigmatised them and especially the annexation as blots upon the good name of Britain. Paul Kruger and his fellow-malcontents among the Boers at once seized upon these words as a promise of reversal of the annexation and a return to the old policy of the Sand River Convention of 1852 if the Liberals should come into power. They publicly thanked Gladstone for his words in the hope of pinning him down to action although he attempted to retreat. In April 1880, the Conservatives were heavily defeated at the General Election and the Liberals took office with Gladstone as Prime Minister once more and Lord Kimberley as Colonial Secretary. Their failure to understand how far things had moved in South Africa was illustrated by the strict instructions they sent out to Sir Bartle Frere to press on with the federation scheme, although he had warned them that the time was inopportune. Within three months he was recalled in disgrace and it seemed as

though the salutary principle that colonial Governors were independent of political changes in Great Britain had been abandoned. The Queen strongly disapproved of the recall both on these grounds and for the manifest injustice that was being done to a great public servant, but Gladstone and his triumphant followers would not listen, and Frere came back a broken man. He was the last Governor of independent mind and first-rate ability who was appointed to South Africa for fifteen years. His successors were capable and hard-working officials, but their policy was dictated from London and the responsibility for its incompetence must rest upon the shoulders of the Imperial Cabinet.

After the Midlothian speeches the Boer leaders held their hands for a time in the belief that the Liberals would at once take steps to reverse the annexation carried out by the Conservatives and restore the autonomy of the South African Republic. Their disgust when they learned of Gladstone's refusal and his determination to maintain a form of Crown colony government in the Transvaal until a self-governing constitution could be established confirmed their belief that they had been tricked and they resolved to appeal to arms.

On Dingaan's Day (December 16th, 1880), the traditional celebration of the victory of their trekker forefathers over the Zulus, the Transvaal Boers rose in revolt under the lead of Kruger and Joubert. Some of the scattered British detachments in the wide spaces of the veld were overwhelmed, while others were beleaguered and threatened with the same fate. Help could only reach them in time from Natal, but it was essential to move at once, for in the spirit of discontent which was prevalent the revolt might easily spread to the older colonies. Sir George Colley, the military commander in Natal, had little more than a thousand troops at his disposal, but he resolved to move up over the mountains at once. At the Pass of Laing's Nek he was repulsed by Joubert at the end of January 1881, and at the beginning of February he tried again. The result was the disastrous fight at Majuba in which Colley lost his life and more than half his force of 554 men were killed, wounded or taken prisoner. In a military sense the engagement was nothing more than an unfortunate incident, for strong reinforcements had already arrived in Natal under Sir Evelyn Wood. But its results were incalculably greater, for the ill-organised Boer

farmers of the Transvaal had administered a defeat to British regular soldiers such as had never been known before in South Africa. The news was received in England with astonishment, but the Boers were overjoyed. Their rising spirit of nationalism received a tremendous fillip and they believed that they had only to follow up their victory to rouse their fellows in Cape Colony and drive the British into the sea.

The consequences of these happenings were made even more unfortunate by the ill-judged action of the British ministers. They had foreshadowed a reversal of the annexation, and if they had carried it into effect immediately they came into office or had granted the Boers at once a self-governing constitution in the Transvaal, they might have furthered the cause of federation which they desired. But then they had done nothing and now they did incalculable harm by directing their military commanders in South Africa to ask for an immediate armistice. Joubert and his fighting men were convinced that they had beaten the British to their knees and that they were now their humble suitors, but Gladstone and Kimberley, of course, thought nothing of the sort. The Queen told them frankly that they were storing up grave future troubles by accepting the humiliation of a precipitate settlement after an unredeemed defeat. But they would not listen, for they prided themselves on the magnanimity they were exhibiting. In August 1881 a Convention was agreed to at Pretoria by which the complete self-government of the Transvaal was recognised "under the suzerainty of Her Majesty," a phrase that was nowhere defined and being unknown to diplomatic instruments might be understood in very different senses by either side. The next few years were to show that the Boers were determined that, as far as in them lay, British suzerainty should mean nothing.

With the Convention of Pretoria South African questions passed from the forefront of interest in Great Britain, for as we shall see later they were eclipsed by events at the other end of the continent and Wolseley's victories in Egypt covered up the unpleasant memories of Majuba. But there can be no doubt that they and the precipitate withdrawal from the Transvaal seriously damaged British prestige in the chancelleries of Europe. We shall deal with the results in a subsequent chapter, but here we need

only refer to the advantage that Paul Kruger, the shrewd and very capable President of the South African Republic, took of the ever-growing difficulties that poured down upon the Gladstone Cabinet between 1881 and 1884.

The retrocession of the Transvaal converted the Boer burghers from an exclusive caste into an ambitious young nation with the determination to establish a Federated African Republic stretching from the Cape to the borders of Mozambique from which all British influence should be extruded, peacefully by intrigue if that were possible, but in the last resort by force of arms. Such were the unconcealed aims of the newly founded Afrikaner Bond which derived its main support from the enthusiasm of the younger men of Dutch descent in Cape Colony but was frowned upon by more responsible leaders both at the Cape and in the Free State. Kruger would have no Bond interference with his authority because he aspired to make the South African Republic the paramount power everywhere from the Zambesi to the ocean, and he believed that he could best achieve his ends by playing upon the weakness of the British politicians he despised. Jan Hofmeyr at the Cape, too, was determined not to allow young hot-heads to use the Bond as a revolutionary organisation and, as we shall see later, resolved to guide it into safer courses as a constitutional party in the responsible legislature of Cape Colony. But it was only gradually that he could accomplish that statesmanlike aim and it was not until he came to terms with a young Englishman, Cecil Rhodes, who was first elected to the Legislature in 1883, that there was a real measure of advance. Meanwhile the Transvaalers were contemptuously pushing aside the restrictions of the Convention of Pretoria which confined them within their own boundaries and forbade them to interfere with and encroach upon the territories of the neighbouring tribes. The whole country was kept in a ferment. On the Zululand border the trekkers pushed forward and obtained from the broken Zulus large grants of land on which they founded what they called the "New Republic"; in the south-west other bands fomented disputes with the Bechuanas and strove to seize lands that would block the Missionaries' Road to the north where they were opposed by European adventurers from the diamond fields who were working for their own personal interest. Two little republics called

Stellaland and Goshen were set up by the Boer intruders into Bechuanaland in 1882-3 without any restraining influence from the Transvaal, and Kruger saw his opportunity to play upon the fears of the Colonial Office and secure a revision of the Pretoria Convention which would set him free from its restrictions.

In 1883 he came to London to meet Lord Derby, Gladstone's new Colonial Secretary, and made far-reaching suggestions for the revision of the Convention on the plea that Lord Kimberley had promised to consider them as possible future concessions. He claimed the rectification of the frontiers of the South African Republic, relief from its debts to the British Exchequer and the abandonment of the suzerainty. 'The Republic should be recognised as a Sovereign Power with full treaty rights and in case of dispute the reference of the questions at issue to foreign arbitration. To such fundamental demands Lord Derby returned an uncompromising refusal, as he was bound to do if Britain's whole position in South Africa were not to be gravely imperilled. He was willing to accept the revival of the name of the South African Republic and to omit the mention of "suzerainty" from the new Convention, but further he would not go. The instrument known as the Convention of London was signed in February 1884, and most its provisions were merely slight modifications of that of 1881. But the essential point was that the Republic had to acquiesce in the retention of the prohibition of diplomatic relations or the making of treaties with any foreign power but the Free State, which to Lord Derby definitely meant the denial of sovereign status and the retention of Britain's paramountcy. Some part of the lands of the short-lived republics of Stellaland and Goshen were added to the Transvaal, but the territories along the Missionaries' Road were protected from further Boer encroachments and so the way up from the Cape into the far north was kept open.

Kruger's design to hem in the British colony by a block of territory that should link up with the new German annexations on the west coast had been defeated, but his power was consolidated in the Transvaal and for the next fifteen years he was able to pursue his anti-British designs with ever-growing ambitions. South Africa had been swept during the thirty years of transition between 1854 and 1884 from a colonial backwater into the rapids of the main stream of Imperial policy.

CHAPTER XII

THE DEVELOPMENT OF BRITISH INDIA, 1856-80

THE administration of Lord Dalhousie stands out in the history of British India for two reasons at least. It saw the final step in the advance of the Paramount Power to the natural geographical frontiers of India and the crystallisation of the main parts of the administrative system into their permanent form. It is therefore the conclusion of one epoch and the commencement of another and so demands our special attention. The annexation of the Punjab carried British rule to the foot of the passes of the north-west frontier which lead up out of the Indian plains into the mountains and plateaux of Afghanistan and Central Asia with their widely different conditions. The annexation of Assam a little before Dalhousie's time rounded off the frontier on the north-east to where the precipitous and densely forested regions shut India off from Southern China. In other directions India is bounded by the sea and the only place where the territory of the Company overpassed the natural boundaries was in Burma where a land of very different characteristics was annexed after the Second Burmese War (1852).

The process of expansion took almost exactly a century from the time when Clive first brought a large Indian population under British rule in Bengal. The history of that century is filled with wars, but when the pacification had once been accomplished the succeeding period has been one of complete internal peace, which proves that what had been done was recognised by Indians as just and acceptable in the main. The work of the time since Dalhousie has on the political side been the adapting of the machinery of government under the Paramount Power to the needs of the Indian peoples. That it should have been carried out with their acquiescence and general support is perhaps the most striking testimony to the merits of British rule that our Imperial history has to show. It has been so peaceful and gradual a development that the period has not lent itself to dramatic description. The battles and wars of the previous century afford ample scope for

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the popular historian or the text-book writer, but gradual administrative and economic changes offer little attraction and it is for this reason that the second century of British rule in India is less known than the first.

The period between the end of Dalhousie's Governor-Generalship and the war of 1914 may be divided into two parts by the accession of the Gladstone Government to office in 1880. The earlier years were a time of internal organisation and consolidation, but these movements were overshadowed by the difficulties of the Government of India with its neighbours which made our Asiatic commitments of great influence in the shaping of the Empire's foreign policy. We deal with these years in our present chapter, leaving till later the attempts to liberalise and democratise the Indian Constitution which have been the outstanding movements of the period since 1880.

By the middle of the nineteenth century the system by which the Governor-General was supposed to govern India as the servant of a Board of Directors sitting in London had shrivelled to be only nominal. All the power in matters of high policy was in the hands of the President of an unsummoned Board of Control, who was the Cabinet Minister in charge of Indian affairs.

The Company had been shorn of its powers stage by stage at successive renewals of its charter, and in the last of these, in 1853, the process was completed in all but name. By the changes brought into effect at this time, the form of Indian administration became substantially what it has remained ever since. At the centre was the Government of India administered by the Governor-General with an advisory Council composed of his chief officials; there were three Presidencies of Bengal, Bombay and Madras, of which the first covered Northern India and was the most important. The Presidency of Bengal was organised into five provinces, the Lieutenant-Governorships of Bengal and the North-West Provinces, the Chief Commissionership of the Punjab, which was raised later to a Lieutenant-Governorship, and the Chief Commissionerships of Oudh and the Central Provinces. Bengal included Bihar and Orissa, but Burma was separated from it as a Chief Commissionership in 1862 and Assam in 1874. The Presidency of Madras remained as a unit, but Bombay had a semi-independent Commissioner in Sind who

exercised exceptional powers. The boundaries of the various administrative units were defined by Dalhousie and this step forward marked unmistakably the fact that Indian administration had passed from the fluid into the completely organised stage. Numerous reforms were still to come, but they did not change the main outlines of Dalhousie's far-reaching plan, which must be remembered in order to grasp the scene on which all future movements took place. The essential distinction was between this directly-administered British India and the Native States under their Princes which were inextricably intermingled with almost every part of it.

The Native States had all crystallised and been assured of their existence and rights under a mixture of written treaties and unwritten usages and conventions during the period of pacification. Dalhousie was firmly convinced, however, that the Indian peoples were better off under the direct rule of the Company than under that of subordinate Princes protected by the Paramount Power. He held a doctrine which had long been known in Indian customary law. This was that all the States were held as fiefs from the Paramount Power as overlord and that, when the last of a line of Princes had no heir, his territories lapsed at his death to the suzerain, or escheated as Western feudal law called it. The Princes detested the Doctrine of Lapse, for they held it contrary to the ancient Indian custom by which upon the probable failure of the line adoption of an heir might be allowed, so that the carrying-on of the dynasty could be assured. Nevertheless Dalhousie carried out several annexations where lapse had occurred, and this gave rise to a good deal of discontent among certain of the lesser ruling houses with significant consequences at the time of the Mutiny.

Of more influence on the history of the Native States, there was the recognised principle that, where a Prince was clearly misgoverning his State and he persisted in neglecting the warnings that were given to him, the Paramount Power might properly intervene in the internal affairs of the State. The offending Prince might be removed and replaced by another member of his House, or the whole dynasty might be excluded and the State annexed to British India permanently or administered for a time, as happened in the important case of Mysore between 1831 and 1881.

The principle did not depend upon written instruments, but was inherent in the ideas underlying Paramountcy. The British had come into a paramount position by the exercise of their military power, but Indians had acquiesced in it only because they realised that it would be exercised for the common good and in accordance with principles of equity and fair dealing. This is one of the strongest testimonies that Britain attained her position in India not as a conqueror to serve her own narrow interests or for glory but because she supplied what India needed, above all, a nucleus of order and good government actuated by equitable principles to rescue her from the welter of anarchy and self-seeking into which she had fallen.

The most flagrant case under Dalhousie was that of the Kingdom of Oudh, which had long been a by-word for corruption and misgovernment. After many repeated warnings it was decided that the scandals in Oudh could no longer be permitted to persist, and the authorities at home gave explicit authority for the annexation of the Kingdom and its direct administration as a province of British India. Accordingly, almost as the last important act of his Governor-Generalship, Dalhousie formally annexed Oudh in 1856 and its government was taken over by British officials organised on the usual plan.

Meanwhile grave trouble was brewing in the ranks of the Company's army, especially in Bengal. The army was a mercenary one recruited from districts often far distant from those in which they served. Many of the men in the regiments came from Oudh and were very much discontented with the annexation of that Kingdom and the closing of future opportunities when they had finished their engagements with the Company to enrich themselves in the hot-bed of corruption there. Others were bored with garrison duty where there was no chance of fighting and the standard of discipline was very low. The European officers had a blind belief in the loyalty of their regiments and many of them were slack in the performance of their duties, leaving much to the Indian under-officers who had been promoted from the ranks and shared in the grievances of their men. Besides these causes of weakness many disquieting rumours were in circulation that the Government were planning measures which would infringe the rigid caste rules and that the missionaries with Government ap-

proval aimed at a mass conversion of the sepoys to Christianity. Such ideas were industriously fanned by agitators in the cantonments and when Dalhousie retired in 1856 the smouldering grievances were ready to burst into flame. The Mutiny broke out at Meerut, not far from Delhi, in May 1857 when the word went round that the Government had taken direct action to destroy the Hindu and Muslim faiths by ordering that the new cartridges distributed to the army should be greased with cow fat which would be pollution to the Hindus and pig fat which was hated by the Muslims. The tragic blunders of officialdom which gave grounds, however slight, for these stories fanned the fears of the mass of the sepoys to white heat, and in camp after camp they slaughtered their officers and marched off to join the rebel forces which were gradually coalescing into some organised form. There was no wide or well-organised conspiracy, but the extension of the outbreaks was gradual, following the initial successes of the mutineers. Some individuals of position joined their ranks in the hope of repairing the wrongs their Houses had suffered by the application of the Doctrine of Lapse, but there was no national movement to support the outbreak and no important Prince took the side of the mutineers. It was the fear of returning to the anarchy and rapine of the eighteenth century that retained the support of the more responsible classes for the side of law and order, and only where anarchy had prevailed so recently that barriers had not been completely built against it, did the social structure crumble down into revolutionary conditions.

At the height of the power of the mutineers Oudh was wholly overrun by them and the region between the Ganges and the Jumna from Patna through Cawnpore and Lucknow to Delhi fell into anarchy. But the Punjab further north was unshaken and under John Lawrence, its able Chief Commissioner, it became the base from which the columns converging against the rebels who were besieging Delhi received invaluable help both in men and stores. Bombay was hardly disturbed at all, while the Madras Presidency was unaffected. In fact we may say that the movement, dangerous as it was, was properly described as a "mutiny," the mutiny of the Indian mercenaries in the Bengal army, and was only the last and greatest successor of such movements as more

than once had caused trouble in the Company's armies in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

It is unnecessary here to trace the course of the campaigns by which the mutineers were overcome, for the story is recounted in every text-book of English and Indian history. It is sufficient to recall that the major operations were over by the early part of 1858; all the three great centres of fighting, Delhi, Lucknow and Cawnpore, had been occupied and it only remained to hunt down the scattering remnants of the rebel armies which were gradually reduced to bands of outlaws who only emerged from their jungles to rob and plunder unprotected villagers. By the end of 1858 the operations had dwindled down to police affairs such as often had to be undertaken against dacoit bands at many periods in Indian history.

What is of main consequence for our purpose is to estimate the lasting effects of the Indian Mutiny on Imperial policy. The news of the tragic happenings horrified the British public and aroused again the sense of responsibility for Indian affairs which had been so notably evidenced at the time of Burke's great invectives in Parliament seventy odd years before. As a general rule the average Englishman left Indian business to the specialist, and debates in Parliament about it attracted little attention. Only when matters of great importance arose and Britain's position in India seemed to be threatened were matters different, and 1857 was clearly such an occasion. The country as a whole decided intuitively that the elaborate shams of the outworn rule of the East India Company must be swept away and a new constitution established which should really embody in legal form the actual system of government that had gradually been worked out in practice, though it had been masked by the retention of forms that were now an anachronism. In August 1858 an Act for the Better Government of India received the Royal Assent and the Crown assumed the whole responsibility, the East India Company being abolished. The powers of the Directors and the President of the Board of Control were placed in the hands of a new Secretary of State for India, who as a member of the Cabinet was directly responsible to Parliament. The Governor-General was raised to the rank of Viceroy and the executive power of carrying out the broad lines of policy decided upon by the Cabinet was wholly

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entrusted to him. Parliament fully realised that it was impossible to debate in detail the measures for carrying that policy into effect, and that task was laid upon the shoulders of the Viceroy who with the aid of his Executive Council administered the Government of India.

The new constitution was brought into operation by Lord Canning as Viceroy at the end of 1858, but it took the next few years to remodel the details of the machinery. Probably the most important change was that introduced by Canning into the working of the Executive Council and legalised by an Act of 1861. It was closely akin to the system of Cabinet government in Great Britain. Large questions of policy were debated by the Executive Council as a whole, but each member was placed in charge of a particular department of business, legal, military, financial and so on, while the Viceroy took direct charge of the political business including foreign affairs and presided in the Council. He had power to override the majority of the Council in cases of emergency, but this power was very rarely exercised.

A Legislative Council had been established under the Charter Act of 1853 consisting of twelve officials, but by the Act of 1861 unofficial nominated members were added to afford some means of voicing public opinion. However, the powers of the Legislative Council were restricted to the debating of the legislative measures submitted to it and the Government's policy was in no sense subject to its control. That policy was the affair of the now fully organised bureaucracy—a bureaucracy composed of officials of the highest character and devotion to duty but necessarily conservative in temper and perhaps over-anxious to abide by existing regulations and precedents. The power of scrutiny by Parliament was only effective on occasions of great importance, for the Houses were not interested in affairs in which few members had experience and which did not furnish good material for parties to struggle over or on which to rouse the electorate against the Ministry. Everything depended on the character of the Viceroy, who alone could scrutinise effectively the work of the heads of the departments. If he were easy-going, as most of the Viceroys were between Canning (1856-62) and Ripon (1880-84), the great governmental machine would work on steadily, but there would be little attempt to grapple with new problems as they arose or to sweep away

redundant formalities. Only when a Viceroy of first-rate ability and great personal initiative came into power, as Lord Dufferin did in 1884, was the complacency of officialism disturbed and recognition given to the undoubted fact that a new India was growing up and that educated Indians were beginning to want to do things for themselves and not have everything decided by a bureaucracy, however beneficent and paternal.

While the internal history of India between 1858 and 1880 was thus comparatively uneventful, beyond the frontiers there were striking and significant happenings. India was in the forefront of the movements that were changing the face of Asia and what was done by the Government of India as the adviser and the agent of the British Cabinet necessarily affected the Empire as a whole. The most distant sphere in which it swayed our policy was in the Far East where China and Japan were both endeavouring to maintain a policy of rigid exclusion. In the former case this was infringed by the corrupt practices of local mandarins, who took advantage of the insatiable eagerness of Europeans for China tea to squeeze from their merchants exorbitant and capricious dues. The only product they would readily accept in payment for the tea was Indian opium and to cheapen its rate of exchange they prohibited its import on moral grounds and then profitably connived at its smuggling. From these malpractices there resulted the Opium War of 1840-2 wherein forces directed from India broke down the farcical resistance of the Emperor and compelled him to sign the Treaty of Nankin by which Europeans were admitted to trade on guaranteed conditions in certain "treaty ports," of which the most notable was Shanghai. Britain secured the cession of the barren island of Hong Kong near the mouth of the West River to serve as an entrepôt for her trade in South China in place of the warehouses on the wharves of Canton which had been the cause of trouble between the local mandarins and the East India Company's factors for a hundred and fifty years.

The Treaty of Nankin is of great importance in the history of Asia, not because it gave new openings to British commerce, but because it showed up the decline of the Imperial power in China. It began a prolonged period of wrangling between the merchants who wanted to buy their tea cheap and sell their opium dear, and the mandarins who disputed every provision of the treaty and

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sought every opportunity of recovering their illicit gains. The Indian Government was directly interested in the results of these disputes, for the raising of opium in Bengal was a Government monopoly carried on by the peasants under licence and the sale of the drug furnished a very important item in the revenue. The troubles in the trade came to a head in 1856, but the Mutiny made it impossible to take action until 1859. The French had also suffered from the difficulties in enforcing the privileges gained in the Treaty of Nankin and a joint Anglo-French expedition was organised to enforce compliance on the Chinese Government. In 1859 and 1860 military and naval operations were undertaken and with the occupation of Peking, the Imperial capital, the Manchu Emperor was compelled to ratify the severe Treaty of Tientsin by which the privileges of the Europeans in the treaty ports were consolidated and extended and the colony of Hong Kong was increased by the cession of the Kowloon Peninsula on the adjacent mainland.

The treaty of 1860 was fatal to the restoration of a strong central power in China. It coincided with the devastating Taiping Rebellion in the Southern provinces and began a period of disorder and decay in orderly government which brought China into chaos and made her troubles a major problem of policy for every Asiatic Power. India was necessarily closely interested and thenceforward China could never be overlooked in the shaping of the relations of the British Empire with other Powers.

The Chinese War of 1860 was the last instance in which the financial interests of the Government of India were directly involved in a question arising far removed from its borders. In the other cases of this period the motive for action was to remove the disturbing influence of an ill-governed neighbour on an Indian province or to erect a defence against the ambitions of a rival great Power. These motives might be concurrent, but in the case of the Kingdom of Burma which bounded the Presidency of Bengal on the east only the first was responsible for the measures taken; for there was no threat of foreign intervention. Burma as was stated in a previous chapter had been a centre of disturbance earlier in the century and the primitive wars that had ensued had resulted in the successive annexation of Assam and Aracan, the portions of territory at one time under Burmese sovereignty that

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lay contiguous to British India. For many years our relations with the Kingdom of Upper Burma, which remained independent, were comparatively friendly though there were numerous occasions on which the ill-organised and ill-governed kingdom had interfered with our interests and had to be warned to keep better order on its borders. Things became much worse with the accession of Thibaw to power in Upper Burma, and in 1879 the trouble culminated in such flagrant injustices perpetrated upon the Queen's subjects that the British Resident was withdrawn from the Burmese capital at Mandalay. Thibaw was warned that further misbehaviour would be followed by strong action, but it was of no avail, and six years later the Government of India was compelled to despatch an expedition against the recalcitrant king. He was obliged to surrender and the independent State of Burma ceased to exist, the territory being annexed to the Indian Empire whose territory was thus rounded off to the east up to the borders of Siam.

In the west the problems were much graver. Relations with Persia were always a matter of concern to the Indian Government and with the annexation of Sind it became important to stabilise conditions among the tribes of Baluchistan which lay between the new acquisition and the Persian border. The region is of great strategic importance, for through its northern part runs one of the two great highways into India, through Kandahar to Quetta and the valley of the Indus which from time immemorial had been traversed by invaders who came out of the wilds of Central Asia to conquer and loot the rich cities of the Indian plains. From 1854 onwards various agreements were made with the Baluchi chieftains by which they promised good behaviour in return for protection, but it was not until Robert Sandeman did his admirable work of controlling the tribes by his just and consistent influence that Baluchistan was brought to rest and the southern part of India's frontier to the west was made secure.

The second great highway into India comes down through the Khyber Pass to Peshawar and the Indus from Kabul, the principal city in Afghanistan. After the troubles of the 'forties our relations with that country remained peaceful for some twenty years but in the 'sixties civil war broke out between rival claimants to the succession to the Amirate and each contestant strove to secure the

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help and countenance of one of the great Powers on the borders. Russia was at that time making astonishingly rapid progress in Central Asia and bringing the Islamic communities of Trans-Caucasia, the Trans-Caspian region and Turkestan under her control and protection. Her advance on the northern frontier of Persia was watched with anxiety by the Indian Government and stimulated its action in Baluchistan, but it was in Afghanistan that the principal danger lay. Russia's intrigues with the rival claimants for power seemed to foreshadow her advance right up to the Khyber, which would place her at the very gate of India, or in Southern Afghanistan to Kandahar which would be just as dangerous.

The threat was a calculated move to further Russia's aims in European politics by occupying England's attention elsewhere and it was very effective. The Government of India was alarmed and the Viceroy, Lord Northbrook, in 1873 decided to abandon the policy pursued for thirty years and promise his support to Sher Ali, the strongest of the contestants for the Amirate. His decision was, however, overruled by the Gladstone Cabinet which, as we saw when we were speaking of South Africa, was irresolute in decision and averse to accepting Imperial responsibility. Sher Ali was therefore driven to turn to Russia and secure from her what help he could against his rivals. The discussion of the Afghan question was carried on in England with considerable heat and the division of opinion upon it generally followed party lines thus bringing Indian affairs for the first time into the arena of British politics. We have already noted how South Africa was at about the same time becoming a subject of party debate in the struggles of the House of Commons, and for the next few years Afghanistan and South Africa were concurrent topics for acute controversy.

When Disraeli came into power after the General Election of 1874 he was moved by his fears for the safety of the Indian frontier to reverse the decision of his predecessors; he resolved to strengthen the military forces in the north-west and to establish a British Resident at Kabul. Sher Ali refused to agree and welcomed a Russian agent instead. Lord Northbrook had resigned the Viceroyalty when the policy of the Liberal Cabinet was reversed and this seemed to indicate a new and most dangerous precedent.

The Governor-Generalship or Viceroyalty had never been affected by party changes, but now it seemed as though its impartiality was to be infringed and that a change of ministry in Great Britain would involve the greatest office in the outer empire.

Lord Lytton, Northbrook's successor, received authority to take strong action to counter the Russian moves in Kabul and when Sher Ali refused to comply with an ultimatum and receive a British Resident, Afghanistan was invaded to exact obedience. Sher Ali fled to Russian territory and his successor accepted the Treaty of Gandamak (May 1879) by which he agreed to carry on the foreign relations of Afghanistan in accordance with the advice of the Viceroy. The territory round Quetta was ceded to the British and thus the southern route into India was protected, but otherwise the value of the treaty was negligible. New claimants for the succession to the Amirate arose and found followers among the fanatical Afghan tribesmen who detested European interference in their country from whatever side it came, whether from Russia or from India. One of them inflicted a severe defeat at Maiwand on the British force stationed at Kandahar and had it not been for the military genius of Sir Frederick Roberts who brought up reinforcements by forced marches from Kabul to Kandahar, there is little doubt that the whole of Afghanistan would have burst into flame which would have spread all along the frontier. It was only by the accession of Abdurrahman, an Amir of rare ability, that peace was re-established. He was determined to exclude all European influence from his country and to work in unison with the Government of India to keep order on the frontier if they would but return to the old policy of abstention from all interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. The British were quite ready to agree to this, for it meant that the Russian advance was repelled and the north-west frontier guarded from surprise. Henceforward it was the settled policy of successive Viceroys to support Abdurrahman as an independent ally but to refrain from all influence in the internal affairs of his country. This policy was decided upon by the new Gladstone Cabinet as a part of the larger plan to withdraw from all the imperial adventures of their Conservative opponents, but it was better designed and better fated than the similar policy adopted concurrently in South Africa. It rounded off the Indian frontier to its natural limits, thus

completing the process of territorial expansion that Clive had begun.

Turning now to other aspects of India's development during the period 1856-80 we must say something of it first on the material and then on the cultural side. Rudyard Kipling has written of "the unchanging East" and in fundamentals some of that phrase may be justified, but in all but the most deeply-seated characteristics vast changes were already in evidence in their early stages in this interim period. Though their full implication did not appear till well on in the twentieth century and many of the changes are still in rapid progress, already in the India of 1880 it was possible to see the foreshadowing of modern India. The old stagnation of pre-Mutiny days, both cultural and material, had been broken up and in every direction progress had begun.

The most patent promoter of change in the material sphere was the railway. Where the primitive means of transport by bullock cart could only move the produce of the cultivators to local markets and the lack of roads impeded all communications between province and province, the railway could carry unlimited loads of produce down to far-distant ports there to be loaded on shipboard for transport to the insatiable markets of Europe. Indian merchants and bankers found abundant scope for their energies in organising the collection of the produce from the peasant cultivators and its disposal to the exporters. So the lesser towns became busy centres while the great ports, Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and Karachi, attracted enormous immigrant populations who had left their native villages to better themselves by working for the Europeans who shipped the produce from their new docks and warehouses. As the export markets and these town populations made greater demands on the supplies of foodstuffs, so their prices rose and a greater surplus was available for the cultivator over and above the amounts he had to pay in rent and taxes. Thus he could somewhat increase his demand for the simple things he needed and factories sprang up in the great centres to supply this demand with cheaper and better machine-made goods than could be produced by the old handicraftsmen in the villages. Europeans, merchants and bankers, came in to finance and organise these new factories and to show their workers how to use the

machines imported from England, while many Indians, especially Parsis and the merchant families of Sind and Bombay, also took part in the movement and aided in the enormous development of the great urban centres. Thus there was an increase in the numbers and well-being of the urban middle-classes as distinguished from the land-owning squirearchy and the cultivators of the countryside.

It was in this urban middle-class that the most fertile seed bed for cultural progress was found. In the new Colleges that had been established after Macaulay's educational reforms their sons could obtain a smattering of that western learning which would enable them to enter the competitive examinations by which entry could be secured into the government service. If they were unsuccessful, or if they preferred it, they might take legal qualifications and try their fortunes in the Courts of Law. Good prizes were to be won there, but the great majority of the pleaders found it hard to make a living and it was among their ranks that recruits were found for the movements that were stirring to apply the doctrines of English political philosophy they had learned in their College text-books to Indian conditions. There was an enormously increased use of the English language among the younger men of the middle class who had been educated in the Colleges and it became the usual means of communication between the professional classes of different provinces who otherwise would have been isolated from one another by language differences. Since English was the medium for all higher education and the curriculum was predominantly literary in character, unfortunate tendencies to prefer fluency in the use of words to originality in ideas were encouraged and the new literate middle classes were nurtured in a smattering of western culture acquired from popular English writers that overlooked the essentials that lay behind it. The fashionable doctrine of the time in England was a philosophic liberalism that was peculiarly attractive to the Indian mind, and the gradually arising political consciousness of the literate middle class in India was tinged from the beginning by what represented only one side of English thought.

Down to the 'seventies the only considerable newspapers in India were written by Englishmen for the European community and were hardly read by Indians at all. But as the literate classes

increased and the knowledge of English became more widespread, journals were founded and written by educated Indians in English for circulation among their fellows. The European-edited papers had provided the only common forum for criticism of the measures of the bureaucrats of the Government, and from the beginning the Indian journals followed this lead towards political discussion and criticism. Ambitious young men who could find no employment in Government service or the professions turned to journalism as a way of making a living and what they wrote was naturally tinged with their own discontent with a system that had found no opening for their energies. The movement was only in its earliest beginnings before 1880, but it was already marked with the anti-Government temper that was to make it so important in later years. Written in English the papers could be read in many provinces, which would have been impossible in the vernacular. Thus for the first time there was an opportunity for ventilating and discussing general Indian as distinguished from provincial or communal ideas. Only the literates in the professions at first availed themselves of the opportunity, but gradually journalism widened its scope and began to handle technical and commercial topics which appealed to a wider clientele.

These signs of progress, however, must not blind us to the essential fact that the fundamental cleavage in Indian society remained unchanged—the communal division between Muslims and Hindus. In earlier periods, at any rate in Northern India, the Muslims were more closely associated with the Government of the Company than were the Hindus. Persian was the language in which Government correspondence was carried on, and much of the law and the practice of the Courts was derived from Muslim sources. With the abolition of official Persian and the introduction of English higher education the Muslims tended to retire from their old association with the Government; comparatively few took the opportunities that were afforded in secular colleges, for to the devout Muslim religion and education are inseparably associated. A far higher percentage of Hindus therefore was found in association with the new movements than was proportioned even to their larger numbers among the upper and middle classes from which literates are drawn. It was in 1875 that a Muslim College was founded at Aligarh which later formed the

nucleus of a great Muslim University whence recruits came to the services and the professions to redeem by their distinction the disparity that seemed to show their community as standing aside from the progress of modern India.

The period was, in fact, not one of uniform or universal advance in a national direction. The forward movements affected different communities in different degrees and had nothing in common. Muslims were separate from Hindus and both from Sikhs and their patriotism was to their community and not to the provinces in which they lived or to India as a whole. In truth the idea of "India" had hardly appeared before 1880. Only the bureaucrats of the Government as yet looked at its problems as a unity and tried to work them out everywhere on similar lines from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin. English language and some part of English culture, English government and the principles of English equity, these were the only unifying influences of this formative period, and its greatest reform movements belonged to particular communities like the Brahmo Somaj and Arya Somaj which in the 'sixties began a moral reform of Hinduism that was of vital influence in later years.

It is to be doubted whether anything of the pregnant changes that were taking place was realised by the average intelligent and well-read Englishman and certainly nothing was known by the general British public. India and its problems were affairs of the specialists—the Anglo-Indians, as they were called. Even they still judged them according to the standards and in the terms of a previous generation. Luckily there was one crowning mercy. The danger that one time threatened was averted, because Indian questions were too difficult for the average back-bench member. There was no readiness to line up under the party whips to fight over them and Indian debates in Parliament remained apart from the divisions of British politics to be dealt with by those who knew. They acted according to what they believed to be good for the Empire as a whole and it was in that spirit that the development of India was fostered.

CHAPTER XIII

THE RISE OF IMPERIALISM, 1868-95

WHEN we were dealing with South Africa, we remarked that the 'seventies saw colonial questions for the first time as a major issue in British party politics. Some of the unfortunate consequences were then dealt with from one particular aspect, and here we look at them from a wider point of view and examine something of the way in which this party conflict arose and its effects on Imperial history in general.

In the 'forties and 'fifties the average Englishman took for granted the fact that Britain was a colonial power, but as a rule he devoted little thought to his relations with the outer empire. He left them to a few officials responsible for the execution of the colonial policy decided on by the narrow group of statesmen who were interested in such things and might occasionally have to justify it to a similarly restricted group of critics in Parliament. Colonial questions took little space in the Press which in the mid-Victorian period had so powerful an influence in directing public opinion to particular topics. Articles on the affairs of the outer empire in the Reviews were comparatively rare and came only from the pens of a group of academic theorists of colonisation.

Many of this group were uniformly averse to the continuance of our imperial burden and desired to cast it off. Sir George Cornewall Lewis was one of the leading writers in the group in the 'forties and their attitude may be expressed in his words as typical. He urged that the colonies should be encouraged to go their way to independence as the old Thirteen Colonies had gone to found the United States of America. Colonial policy should be directed to that end, for if the dominant country wished "voluntarily to recognise the legal independence of such of its own dependencies as were fit for independence, it would by its political arrangements study to prepare for independence those which were still unable to stand alone."

To most people, especially the foremost political thinkers of the time whose doctrine was expressed in the phrases *laissez-faire*,

laisser-aller, which were the hall mark of the fashionable liberalism, it seemed as though the progress of the colonies of settlement towards self-government and responsibility was the natural beginning of the movement towards the dissolution of the Empire which they foresaw. They looked forward complacently to the day when Canada, Australia and New Zealand would bear the same relation to Great Britain as the United States. Their separation had done nothing to impair their trade with us under the low tariff policy that then prevailed and the separatists believed that the precedent would be followed when the new secessions took place.

Twenty years after Cornewall Lewis an even more convinced anti-Imperialist, Goldwin Smith, put the creed of the Little Englanders more definitely. "The time was," he wrote, "when the universal prevalence of commercial monopoly made it worth our while to hold colonies in dependence for the sake of commanding their trade. But that time has gone. Trade is everywhere free or becoming free; and this expensive and perilous connexion has entirely survived its sole legitimate cause" (1863). In this last phrase we see Little Englandism at its height, entirely oblivious of all sentiment or sympathy of kin but with a narrow commercialism that set up direct monetary gain as the only criterion.

The tide was already beginning to turn, however, for though the discussions over Canadian Confederation and its successful accomplishment confirmed the separatists in their belief that secession was fast approaching, in others they encouraged a revival of the sentiments of imperial patriotism that had been sneered at by the apostles of *laisser-faire*. It was Benjamin Disraeli, now the leader of the new Conservative party, who encouraged the revival and voiced the feelings of most Englishmen in inspiring speeches such as had long been unheard in British politics. His new interest in Imperial affairs can first be noted in his speeches about 1868, and it was closely associated with his conviction that England had been losing ground among the Powers by her hesitant and undecided policy. The rising power of Bismarck's new Germany was threatening danger to the balance of Europe and Disraeli believed that British interests were vitally concerned. To so shrewd and far-sighted a realist the wordy predictions of an

approaching international millennium were fantastic, for he justly estimated the most important movement of the time to be the aggressive nationalism that was rearing its head in all parts of Europe. He was thus led to make a fresh examination of England's position in the world and how she had attained it. Clearly her work of colonisation had played a very important part, and so Disraeli came to look at it from a new angle—not as the mere matter of commercial and economic interest which the Manchester School estimated, but as an achievement worthy of pride. Our empire overseas was one of the greatest facts of modern history and its building up had been much more than a business transaction of buying and selling. By bringing together ideas such as these Disraeli helped on the new movement that was already stirring at the end of the 'sixties, which has been called "Imperialism" and is the antithesis of Little Englandism. During the 'seventies and 'eighties the two ideas were in active conflict, but the ultimate victory of Imperialism in the 'nineties made it one of the most potent forces in moulding British thought.

An additional reason which moved Disraeli to become more and more definite in his imperial views was in the fact that his inveterate opponents Gladstone and Granville publicly espoused Little Englandism and expressed their belief in the inevitability of the disintegration of the Empire. In the early days of the first Gladstone Ministry (1868) their attitude towards the colonies seemed to indicate a readiness to hasten the process, but the trend of affairs, especially in South Africa, soon checked this and the parade of Little England ideas was left to the Radical wing of the Liberal party with John Bright as their leading exponent.

It was not until after the German triumph in the Franco-Prussian war that Disraeli placed the imperial idea in the forefront of his policy, but we can see the direction of his thought in what he told the House of Commons in 1871 before the German victory was complete. "Not a single principle in the management of our foreign affairs, accepted by all statesmen for guidance up to a few months ago, any longer exists. . . . There is not a diplomatic tradition which has not been swept away. You have a new world, new influences at work, new and unknown objects and dangers with which to cope, at present involved in that obscurity incident to novelty in such affairs." Britain had come to a turning-

point in her history and how was she to find strength to support her in the new struggle that was opening but by striving for a new unity in her scattered empire wherewith to match the unity that the United States, Germany and Italy had just achieved? If Britain were rid of her colonies, it was no longer possible to believe, as the Little Englanders of the 'fifties and 'sixties proclaimed, that they would remain hers in all but name. Men came to think that, if they were discarded, they might be snapped up eagerly by some aggressive and exclusive foreign power. How would England like to see her ancient colonies falling under the sway of political and commercial rivals to be ruled for their selfish purposes? Was England, asked Froude in 1870, to sink as Holland had done into a community of harmless traders and was she to furnish the only exception to the rule of the unity of kindred peoples?

To these momentous questions Disraeli gave an inspiring answer in his widely acclaimed speech at the Crystal Palace in 1872. In earlier years he had himself been no enthusiastic advocate of British colonial expansion, but now he laid all the blame for Little Englandism on the shoulders of his Liberal opponents. "There has been no effort," he maintained, "so continuous, so subtle, supported by so much energy, and carried on by so much ability and acumen, as the attempt of Liberalism to effect the disintegration of the British Empire."

Britain must decide, and decide rapidly, whether national or cosmopolitan principles should guide her. The issue, he proclaimed, was "whether you will be content to be a comfortable [little] England . . . meeting in due course an inevitable fate, or whether you will be a great country, an imperial country, a country where your sons when they rise, rise to paramount positions, and obtain, not merely the esteem of your countrymen but command the respect of the world?" "No minister in this country," he went on, "will do his duty who neglects an opportunity of reconstructing as much as possible our Colonial Empire, and of responding to those distant sympathies which may become the source of incalculable strength and happiness to this land."

It was with words such as these that Disraeli roused and classified the thoughts that were stirring in the minds of men all over the Empire in the early 'seventies, and they mark him out as the

pre-eminent spokesman of the new Imperialism which was to sweep the Little Englandism of the previous generation into the background. It was left to be the creed of a dwindling clique of Radicals, but it long continued to tinge a large part of Liberal thought. The reason for this was the heat engendered in the party struggle and it had lasting and unfortunate consequences. Liberalism had won its victories as the opponent of privilege and vested interests. Now in the 'seventies the successors of their Tory antagonists were the Conservatives of Disraeli, the most convinced supporters of the new imperialism. But when the rank and file of Liberals lumped together all the doctrines of the Conservatives and included any tenderness for the imperial ideal in the denunciation, the Tory propagandist was tempted to proclaim the British Empire an annexe of the Conservative party and himself the only patriot. Unfortunately the Radicals abetted him by their acid criticism of everything imperial and their revival of the old accusations of self-seeking which had done service against the Tory defenders of privilege. It was not until well after the close of the nineteenth century that the last echoes of the old anti-imperial cries died away from reputable politics. In a later chapter we shall say something as to how all this affected the outlook of the new Labour Party on the Empire when it succeeded to the heritage of so many of the old Liberal ideas, including for a time their "little Englandism."

To group all the leading members of the first Gladstone Cabinet as detractors from the imperial idea would be unfair. W. E. Forster, in fact, was the first leading statesman to identify himself with the new imperialism and he associated it with the idea of applying to the whole Empire some scheme of confederation such as was already, when he spoke in 1870, beginning to prove its success in British North America. He believed, he said, that the colonial problem was almost more important than any other and that some time it would be possible to weld together all the peoples of the colonies of settlement with those of the Mother Country in one great confederation. This pronouncement proved that the problem of imperial organisation would not be left to be fought out on the cries of British party politics, and from the beginning the idea of Imperial Federation was never left wholly to the Conservatives. Its influence in the promotion of a new movement

towards imperial unity permeated both political parties, and as time went on and the methods of achieving it became a subject of active discussion, that discussion did not proceed along party lines but found its advocates in the ranks of both Liberals and Conservatives. It was not until the 'eighties that the phrase "Liberal Imperialists" came to be used, but throughout the 'seventies the ideas associated with it commanded influential support among their party and thus the new Imperialism was saved from the dangers that would have overtaken it had it been the ideal of only one of the political parties.

In the self-governing colonies no important party showed active separatist tendencies or readiness to accept the contention of the Little England theorists that secession was ultimately inevitable. They were stronger supporters of the ideal of United Empire than most Englishmen in the 'seventies, though that did not mean that they were willing to merge their new-born nationalism in some centralised union held together by any reorganised and centralised imperial machinery. Their adhesion to the ideal was one of inherent loyalty to the Crown and all it stood for, and, looking back, we can now perceive, as the separatist theorists could not, that there was a fundamental and underlying cohesion about the peoples of the Empire that was quite independent of any machinery but was rooted in sentiment and a way of life that was a characteristic of those who owed allegiance to the Crown. It took forty years after the first rise of the new Imperialism about 1870 for that to be realised by all, and the process by which that realisation came about must be a leading theme in most of our remaining pages.

Though domestic matters played the major part in bringing Gladstone's ministry to defeat in 1874 there can be no doubt that general uneasiness at its weakness and indecision in international affairs also turned the electorate against it. The question of imperialism entered very little into the election, but Disraeli's victory gave him the opportunity of putting into practice the ideas he had been preaching and his ministry saw the first try-out of a strong imperialist policy. We have already shown something of the unfortunate results in South Africa where Carnarvon was as resolved to make the facts fit his theories and Froude was as contemptuous of

colonial feelings as the Radicals, but it was in his new foreign policy that Disraeli did his most striking imperial work. It lies beyond our field to say more of that than is necessary to show where it affected the internal history of the Empire.

The first point was in connection with the Suez Canal. As we have mentioned in an earlier chapter the attitude of successive British Governments towards de Lesseps' schemes was hostile from the 'fifties onwards and it was ultimately with the aid of a purely French Company that the Canal was completed and opened in 1869. To secure the necessary decrees to enable the work to be carried out and labour supplies to be ensured de Lesseps found it essential to buy the consent of the Khedive by placing in his ownership half of the Suez Canal Company's shares. The control of the Company thus rested in his hands if he chose to exercise it, but Ismail's only interest in the enterprise was in what it would bring him to satisfy his unending extravagance or to stop the clamour of his importunate creditors. He had contracted loans for £91,000,000 without any assets to back them but the Canal shares, and he had discharged the interest on each loan by drawing on the principal of its successor. This road to ruin was bound to come to an end some day and the Powers could not be blind to Ismail's flagrant misgovernment of his unfortunate subjects and all the scandals that were afflicting Egypt.

In the first years after the opening of the Canal the Gladstone Government was very hostile to making any use of it and preferred to maintain the old means of communicating with India and the East by means of the system built up and worked by the Peninsular and Oriental Company. Within a very short time, however, it was seen that this was a suicidal policy and British shipping was soon using the Canal in far greater volume than that of any other nation. Meanwhile the Khedive's position was going from bad to worse and Ismail had to decide to realise his last remaining asset. The exact date at which he would unload his Canal shares was not known, but in the middle of 1875 rival French financial groups were bargaining over the purchase and the French Government was also considering it but could not come to a decision. The news of all this came privately to Disraeli and by a stroke of genius he determined on an action without precedent. The Canal had already proved itself to be a vital link in the communications

between England and India and its availability could only be assured if Britain had it under control. The readiest way of achieving this without raising difficult questions of Egypt's political sovereignty was to acquire a majority of the Company's shares and hence command the voting power. The step was too bold for Lord Derby, the Foreign Secretary, who hesitated, but the Prime Minister could act without him. In complete secrecy the bargain was made with Ismail, the necessary amount of the purchase money, £4,000,000, was advanced by the financial house of Rothschild and within a fortnight the control of the Canal had passed into the hands of the Power whose shipping was now contributing four-fifths of its revenues. The stroke was a dramatic manifestation of the new imperialism in practice, and though Gladstone violently attacked what had been done as unconstitutional, the country acclaimed the Prime Minister's action and especially its decisiveness as contrasted with the fumbling that had so characterised the previous ministry. Britain's interest in Egypt had been enormously increased since the opening of the Canal and his purchase of the shares showed clearly that Disraeli was determined that her influence should be pre-eminent.

During the next three years, 1876-8, his attention was concentrated on the Eastern Question and the advance of Russia in the Balkans. If she should succeed in occupying Constantinople and commanding the Straits she would secure access to the Mediterranean and come down on the flank of our route to India through the Canal. This would endanger all that he had planned, but he believed that he could prevent it without taking up arms in support of Turkey as we had done in the Crimea twenty years before. The country would have gone into such a struggle hopelessly divided, for the Liberals were raging against our having anything to do with "the unspeakable Turk" and on the other the enthusiasm of the new imperialists was sweeping the country with a wave of war fever and adding a new word to the language.

"We don't want to fight, but by *Jingo* if we do,

"We've got the ships, we've got the men, we've got the money, too."

sang the music halls and the Liberal critics of Disraeli and his policy sneeringly branded its supporters as "jingoes." But the Prime Minister came back triumphantly from the Congress of

Berlin (1878) bringing, as it was said, "Peace with honour," and it seemed as though imperialism had been justified by its fruits. Turkey had been preserved, the Russians had not secured the Straits and the route through the Mediterranean to the Canal had been protected. An additional base from which to guard it had been leased by Turkey for a British naval base in the Eastern Mediterranean. To Disraeli it appeared that Cyprus would well fill this requirement, though his naval and military advisers were doubtful and nothing was done to put the island into a state of defence. Nor were the guarantees to Turkey which were to be the return for the lease ever implemented and the enthusiasm with which the Treaty of Berlin had at first been greeted in England very soon evaporated. The country sank into the great commercial depression of 1879 to listen with disgust to the news of Russia's advance in Afghanistan and of British reverses on the north-west frontier.

Gladstone and every Liberal candidate at the General Election that was fast approaching made the most of this change of mood and anti-imperialism roused again to life in the heat of the party battle. The annexation of the Transvaal, the interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, the pro-Turkish policy and the occupation of Cyprus, all were lumped together and denounced as evidence of the essential immorality of Imperialism and therefore of the Tories who supported it. In his Midlothian campaign, however, there was one significant feature. Gladstone made few references to the colonies, but at any rate he no longer implied that their separation was inevitable or that it was to be encouraged. He exhorted the British people to concentrate on their own affairs and refrain from dangerous foreign adventures, but by implication he included the colonists within the circle. Thus one important result had been gained by ten years of discussion. The maintenance of the British Empire was no longer open to discussion. It was taken for granted by all, as it had not been in 1868-70.

The imperialism of the 'seventies was closely associated with particular views on foreign policy, but after 1880 this association ceased. It had become clear to all that in face of the aggressive nationalism of other powers our foreign policy could not be at the mercy of the exigencies of the party struggle between the "ins"

and the "outs." The national spirit was roused and it was even beginning to be realised that there might be an "imperial" spirit common to all which was something quite different from the "imperialism" that the Little Englanders had attacked. Nationalism and cosmopolitanism were no longer alternative when it was evident that Britain's unchallenged position as the leading colonial power could no longer be taken for granted as it had been for two generations. Discussions about "imperialism" thenceforward were not concerned with foreign affairs but were directed to the possibility of promoting unity between the divers elements of the Empire and to finding new methods for the advancement of the common good. Imperialism in this changed sense was concerned with the internal affairs of the Empire, and the controversies about it were carried on between those who planned new machinery to promote unity and those who had no faith in artificial organisation and preferred to rely upon ties of common sentiment to promote parallel and complementary development in the Mother Country and the colonies.

The discussions in the course of which the imperial idea was firmly implanted in the public mind were unfortunately very ill-informed about the history of the Empire overseas with which they were concerned. School and college text-books, from which the average man derives all the history he knows, were devoted almost wholly to the history of England with only cursory mention of certain battles and wars overseas in a few parentheses. But in the early 'eighties a leading historian broke away from this cramping and parochial tradition and portrayed one side of the imperial story in vivid and arresting pages in such a way as to earn for his book an immense circulation. It is rarely that the publication of a popular historical work can be characterised as an event of national and even international importance, but there can be no doubt that J. R. Seeley's *Expansion of England*, which first appeared in 1883 and has gone through many subsequent editions, must be regarded in this light. It was a collection of lectures easily readable by the average man and therefore far more influential than any more technical work. These historical lectures dealt in the main with the great wars of the eighteenth century and this gave the false impression that the British Empire had largely been founded by war and conquest, an idea that was unfortunately planted firmly

in the public mind, not only in Great Britain, but also in foreign countries. The book gave currency to another misconceived idea. It spoke of the growth of the Empire into the colonies of settlement as the "expansion of England," thus implying that the new communities overseas were but "scattered fragments of a single race," groups of Englishmen in distant continents who had carried with them bits of the old country. This was wholly unregardful of the budding plants of colonial nationalism which by the 'eighties were already clearly discernible, besides neglecting the flagrant fact that many of those who were influential in the development of the new nations did not come from English ancestry. To neglect the contribution of the French-Canadians to the building-up of the new Dominion and the work done by the Dutch in South Africa was patently unjust.

On one point Seeley saw deeper than Sir Charles Dilke, an almost equally influential contributor to the philosophy of imperialism. His *Greater Britain* (1880) was not a collection of historical essays like Seeley's but a study in politics in which he set forth incidentally the idea that the British people were uniquely equipped by Providence to occupy a predominant position in the world and to succeed in the task of governing others, a doctrine that might easily degenerate into flagrant jingoism but was particularly attractive to a certain type of patriot. But as Seeley pointed out from his knowledge of history, the success of English colonisers had been due not to their specially heroic qualities or the ability of their statesmen but to the fact of the insular position of Great Britain and the way in which she had built up a world-wide trade. The point was brought out more convincingly by the American Mahan whose widely read book *The Influence of Sea Power on History* (1890) showed how Britain's commerce was built upon the sea power she had forged to defend her from invasion.

Dilke seems to have been the first widely-read writer to express an idea that became very familiar in later years in a phrase of Kipling, "the White Man's burden." He looked for opportunities for Britain to carry the blessings of civilisation to barbaric peoples and thus to provide a nursery of statesmen and of warriors to be leaders of the nation in the harsh struggles he foresaw. Lord Rosebery in the early days of his political career (1884) expressed similar ideas when he urged that the continued unity of the

British Empire was for the interest of the whole human race. It was on the peoples of British stock that the hopes of those rested who sought to raise and better the patient masses of mankind. It was another Liberal, W. T. Stead, who above all showed how far some members of that party had moved from the *laissez-faire* ideas of their predecessors and how ready they were to encourage the rise of the new imperialism. It was in 1884 that he summarised his ideas in words that would have been utterly repugnant to Gladstone and Granville in the 'seventies. To him the British imperial power was the instrument for maintaining peace among races which would otherwise have been cursed by internecine warfare or for putting down the horrors of slavery and other barbarian works in vast regions. But this involved a very heavy responsibility and might set the Imperial Government in opposition to colonial opinion, as the history of South Africa had proved. But Stead was quite ready to face this danger and he took up an attitude of superior virtue that was exceedingly distasteful to colonial opinion. "We are peopling the world," he wrote, "with the most venturesome of our children, and also, it must be added, the most lawless and unscrupulous of the race. Everywhere they come into rough contact with the aboriginal inhabitants of the lands which they colonise and the savage goes to the wall. It is the duty of the Imperial Government to follow the adventurers with its authority and to restrain the violent impulses of its hard frontiersmen. Where it is impossible for us to be a terrestrial providence for the natives, we can at least act as the outside conscience of the colonists, reminding them in the midst of the stress and strain of local temptations, of the higher law of justice and morality and of right."

We can see in words such as these of Stead with their wide circulation and influence the second element that went to the make-up of the imperialist philosophy of the late 'eighties and early 'nineties. From one side came its jingoistic temper, from the other its claims of a high, moral mission for the British race. The blend of the two was profoundly distasteful to foreign observers who stigmatised it as Pharisaic and held that the high-flown claims of Stead and his many imitators in the Press were nothing but a hypocritical cloak for the self-seeking ambitions of the jingoes. There is little doubt that together they made British policy pro-

foundly mistrusted by men of other nations in the closing years of our period and aroused much of that widespread antagonism to the British Empire and its colonial policy that came to a head between the Jameson Raid of 1895 and the South African War of 1899-1902.

In a sense the leading exponent of Imperialism was Joseph Chamberlain, the ablest of the Radicals in the 'seventies and early 'eighties but the great Colonial Secretary of the Conservative and Liberal Unionist Ministry of 1895. Before we can discuss his contribution to the movement which emphasised so powerfully its economic side, we must say something of the development of economic ideas concerning the Empire during the period to which we have not yet referred. It had an important bearing on our subject, for much of the imperialism of the time had its source in the battles of Fair Trade *versus* Free Trade in the 'eighties.

The extravagant hopes of the Cobdenites of the Manchester School that every nation would follow Britain's example and remove every obstacle in the way of free trade were sadly disappointed as the 'seventies drew on their course. At the beginning of the decade the volume of our foreign trade was far greater than that of the three leading nations on the continent of Europe put together, but at its end it was less than that of the sum of the trade of France and Germany, and the rate of the growth of Germany's trade considerably exceeded the British, while a catastrophic fall in prices made it far more difficult to sell our goods at a profit in overseas market. A very serious industrial depression began in 1876 and there were no signs of its lifting until the beginning of the 'eighties. It brought widespread unemployment and misery to the crowded population of the towns who had none of the means of combating it which are now available. The slight improvement that took place in 1881-2 was merely a lull in the storm, for 1883-6 saw a new industrial depression that was so severe in its effects as to give rise to widespread disorders among the starving unemployed. The troubles were seriously increased by the terrible slump in British agriculture which began in 1878-9 and continued almost unchecked throughout the 'eighties. Ruined farmers and starving labourers flocked into the slums of the towns and added to the distress there. Even to the most convinced Cobdenite it was clear that the national position

was most seriously endangered, while the public at large were moved to look around for some hope of escape from the deepening gloom. They found it in the ideas of the imperialists and it was probably this instinctive sentiment to turn towards the openings for trade and betterment among our own kindred oversea that did more than all the arguments of the politicians to make the new imperialism the most popular movement of the day.

To the manufacturers the position was even more disquieting in the middle 'eighties than to the general public, for they found their goods undersold by competitors whose home markets were being protected by steadily rising tariffs. The Germans especially were undercutting alike in foreign and colonial markets and in Great Britain itself and in consequence there arose a movement for moderate protective tariffs to guard against this competition. The system of free imports into Great Britain and the colonies of the dependent empire must, said its promoters, be abandoned and the self-governing colonies persuaded by reciprocal advantages to allow British goods to pass the tariff walls that most of them had recently erected on easier terms than those granted to goods of foreign origin. The National Fair Trade League in 1881 was founded to promote this policy, but it did not confine itself to urging protective tariffs. Its programme also proclaimed the necessity of developing our Empire and of determining the flow of British capital, skill and industry into our own dominions instead of into foreign protective countries where it becomes a force commercially hostile to us. Thus it was clear that the "Fair Traders" were imperialists and their agitation gave a handle to the Cobdenites to attack imperialism generally as a heresy directed against the pure doctrine of free imports. They found a specially vulnerable point whereon to appeal to the mass of consumers in the desire of the Fair Trade advocates to impose moderate duties on food stuffs from foreign countries. Food stuffs formed the bulk of our imports from the self-governing colonies and these would be admitted free or charged at a lower rate of duty. Thus imperial preference was from the beginning one of the planks of the platform of the new movement and henceforward it was never lost sight of.

Both Dilke and Chamberlain were prominent ministers in the Gladstone Cabinet of 1880-85, but in each case they were opposed

to the remnant of Little Englandism which still hung round the policy of the Prime Minister and many of his colleagues of the Old Guard of Liberalism. They were both imperialist in external politics and wished to see Great Britain take a stronger line against Germany and other aggressive powers, but Chamberlain as a business man by training was more inclined to sympathise with the ideas of the Fair Trade League than Dilke. He took no definite part in the movement, however, till much later when he had broken with the Gladstonian Liberals over Home Rule and we must leave a consideration of his later policy to a subsequent chapter. The bulk of the support for Fair Trade came from the Conservative party, though that was as divided as were the Liberals, as subsequent happenings were to prove. In neither case was the party whole-heartedly in support of a particular imperial policy, and in the one the Liberal Imperialists and in the other the Conservative Free Traders saved the imperial idea from the purely party conflict which had threatened before 1880.

The victory of imperialism in the widest and best sense of the word over the public mind was marked by the Colonial Conference of 1887 which coincided with the Jubilee of Queen Victoria. It was a meeting of leading subjects of the Queen from many parts of the world that was entirely without precedent and was therefore largely informal. But those who accepted invitations to attend were the most influential citizens in the communities in which they lived and necessarily what they said was taken to represent their general public opinion. They received a warm welcome and an honoured position in the pageantry, so that the London crowds seemed to see the Empire as a whole before their eyes where otherwise they would have thought only of the Queen's subjects from the United Kingdom. But now men had come from the most distant parts of the earth to pay homage and affection to the lady who symbolised in herself all that men thought of as the imperial idea. The fact that the pageantry was followed by many business talks was interesting and important, and the Colonial Conference was the first of a series of which we shall have to speak later. But it was probably not that which gave the meetings their unique character. For the first time colonial ideas were expressed not through the mouths of Governors with all the conservatism and red tape that neces-

sarily marks such officials. The colonists themselves could tell the Queen's ministers face to face what they thought of them and their policy and this cleared away some of the old sense of wounded pride that they should be regarded as poor relations. Where all were equal in those informal and unprecedented meetings a feeling common to all prevailed. Proud as each was of his own community and rightly jealous of its autonomy, yet he could feel a wider pride in the Empire as a whole which transcended but included all local loyalties. Behind all the somewhat over-florid language that marks such a royal occasion as a jubilee there was undoubtedly in 1887 this sincere and deep-felt idea and in it we may say that the new imperialism had come to full vigour.

CHAPTER XIV

THE NEW COLONIAL RIVALRY, 1875-85

WITH Germany's victory in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-71 the Western nations became set in a pattern that could only be disturbed at the risk of a much wider conflict. Ambitious soldiers could find no outlet for their energies in Europe and they looked out to distant frontiers for adventure. Many found it in exploration, especially in Africa, where geographical problems in abundance remained to be solved even after the great discoveries of the middle years of the century. Others sought it in the administration of the neglected colonies that had remained under the French flag since the great days of the eighteenth century, like Senegal, or in Algeria whose conquest was still incomplete. There was another field of activity in Further India or Cochin China where France had begun the task of ruling Asiatics under the Second Empire but found herself faced by many difficulties. Ambitious naval officers found their opportunities in extending French interests in the island groups of the Pacific and the Indian Oceans, but wherever they took action they found themselves opposed by British traders who desired to maintain the *status quo* in which they had been carrying on their commerce with the natives for many years. Those traders had no desire to see the territories annexed by Great Britain, but when they were threatened with the exclusion of their trade by the extension of French control they appealed to the British Government for protection. Thus the question of new annexations was brought into the political sphere and a fresh struggle for colonial power began which was to play an important part in international relations for the remainder of the century.

Since the Western world was closed to European rivalries by the great and growing power of the United States which undoubtedly would be used to defend the Monroe Doctrine, only tropical Africa, South-Eastern Asia and the Pacific remained as spheres of action in which their territorial ambitions could be gratified. In certain other regions where actual annexation could

not be aspired to it might be possible to secure a dominating position. Of these Egypt was the most important and it was there that Britain first had to take strong action to defend her interests. We have already remarked how that country had sunk into bankruptcy under the extravagant misrule of the Khedive Ismail and how in 1875 Disraeli had purchased the Suez Canal shares and thus given England a greater stake in Egypt than she had ever had before. The proceeds of the sale of the shares were but a drop in the bucket of Ismail's bottomless debts, and in 1876 he defaulted in the payment of interest to the foreign bondholders, most of whom were English or French. Under these circumstances the two Powers stepped in to control the finances of Egypt through two controllers-general of equal authority, one British and the other French. The Dual Control worked with great difficulty induced by Ismail's intrigues against it and in 1879 it was decided to move his suzerain, the Sultan of Turkey, to depose the Khedive and appoint his son Tewfik in his stead.

The constant irritation caused by the disputes was increased by the exaggerated demands of the foreigners of many European nations, who were resident in Egypt. Under the terms of the complicated tangle of Capitulations they abused their privileged position in regard to taxation and justice and this led to a dangerous anti-foreign movement especially in Alexandria and Cairo. In 1882 the movement came to a head with the outbreak of mutinies among the unpaid and ill-disciplined soldiery and it found a leader in Arabi Pasha who demanded from the Khedive the exclusion of foreign control and seized the fortifications of Alexandria. Anti-foreign rioting broke out, many Italians and Greeks and other foreign residents were killed, and the officials of the Dual Control who had no force at their disposal were helpless, for the Khedive and his ministers could not restore order. Arabi was attempting to make himself master of the country, which would be a dangerous menace to freedom of communication through the Canal.

Faced by this threatening situation England appealed to France to take joint action, but she hesitated from fear of Germany's designs against her in Europe, and finally she refused to co-operate. The Gladstone Government therefore had to take action alone, although it had been a cardinal feature of its announced

policy, when it took office, to abstain from all foreign adventures. The British fleet was ordered to bombard the fortifications of Alexandria, and in July 1882 the mutineers were driven out and landing parties entered the city to restore order.

Arabi launched into open revolt and with his ill-organised army marched against Cairo, but by then a British force under Sir Garnet Wolseley had been landed and in September the rebels were met in battle at Tel-el-Kebir and completely defeated. Cairo was occupied and the Egyptian armies disbanded without difficulty, but the British Government was then faced with the awkward decision as to what was to be the future of the country. Since France had refused to co-operate in the measures that had been taken, the responsibility rested entirely on them, for it was impossible to restore the Dual Control.

There was a serious division of opinion in the Liberal party, for while Bright and others of like temper were violently opposed, Chamberlain and Dilke were determined not to shirk our responsibility and to occupy Egypt until the disorder in the country was completely cleared up and the defence of British interests and the Canal was assured. The pressure of events and the tide of patriotic feeling which had been encouraged by Wolseley's victory made it certain that the latter view would prevail, but all were agreed that the British occupation of Egypt, still legally a part of the Turkish Empire, would only be temporary. It was proclaimed that it would only last until the Khedive and his government could ensure order, and in the interim they were accorded the help of British advisers and administrators. Nominally they were the servants of the Khedive whose sovereignty remained unimpaired, but in reality they were guided by the chief British official in the country who filled the post of consul-general. He was nominally only the equal of the consuls-general of other Powers, but practically his was the ultimate authority, for since he had a veto on all financial measures the Khedive was bound to carry out the policy he advised. A man of unique ability, Sir Evelyn Baring (later Lord Cromer) was appointed to fill the difficult post and for twenty-four years (1883-1907) he carried out the task he had set himself, to build up Egypt from a bankrupt and utterly misgoverned country into a prosperous modern land with order and justice in place of the previous tyranny and corruption.

He was assisted in the early years by Alfred Milner as financial adviser, a point worthy of remembrance in view of later events.

Throughout it all the legal forms of Egyptian sovereignty under the Turkish overlordship were scrupulously maintained. Egypt was not a part of the British Empire, nor was Britain paramount as in a Native State in India. The arrangements merely coincided with a new idea that was making its way in world politics that Egypt lay within the British "sphere of influence" and that therefore she was specially called upon to assist and guide her. To the French, who ever since the time of Napoleon I had had such a close cultural influence over the upper classes in Egypt, the British Occupation was exceedingly distasteful. France was not prepared to take up arms to drive Britain out of the commanding position she had now acquired in the Eastern Mediterranean, but she was completely estranged and this led her to take up an attitude of somewhat petulant hostility to British actions everywhere in the colonial sphere which had important and far-reaching results.

Before we examine the most permanent of them in Africa and the Pacific, we may note that the immersion of Britain in the Egyptian tangle gave an opportunity for Russia to resume her advance in Asia. When the Gladstone Ministry took office, they reversed Lord Lytton's policy in Afghanistan and withdrew from intervention in that country. Abdurrahman, the new Amir, was just as determined to thrust out Russian interference as British, but when Russia advanced to Merv her frontier was brought directly up to the Afghan border. There was acute dispute over the delimitation of the frontier, and in 1885 Russian forces on the spot seized Penjdeh, which was one of the strong points in question. Public opinion was strongly roused in India which feared a renewal of Russian designs against Afghanistan and our north-west frontier. There were threats of war, but ultimately Russia's preoccupations elsewhere led the Tsar to disavow the precipitate action of his generals and the frontier between his new annexations and Afghanistan was peacefully delimited by agreement.

The trouble, however, aided to cramp British action in the face of the new rivalry that had arisen in tropical Africa and the Pacific from the advance of a fresh competitor for colonial power.

The international struggle was no longer confined to Europe and the Near East, as it had been since the Napoleonic wars. It was now world-wide and only the Western hemisphere remained beyond its scope. Ambitions in the outer world which might produce the gravest consequences had now to be kept continually in mind by British ministers, and their policy could no longer be considered only in water-tight compartments concerning particular colonies. Internal affairs might still be dealt with thus, but where another Power was concerned what took place in the Pacific might easily be governed by what was going on in Egypt or Central Africa. Colonial affairs were now almost of as direct an interest to the Foreign as to the Colonial Secretary.

Among the colonial powers France alone showed any desire to extend her territories, for Holland and Spain were only anxious as to the preservation of the remnants of their once great empires. Portugal was in a different position, for, though actually only, a comparatively small amount of territory in Africa was under her direct administration, she had immense claims which could be backed up or disputed on historical evidence according as interest dictated. This neglected or abandoned colonial heritage of the power whose subjects had first entered the African interior began to excite new attention in England from the time of Livingstone's explorations of the 'fifties onward, but it was not until the middle 'seventies that it became a question of practical importance in the diplomatic struggles of rival powers. Portugal still actually administered the two great colonies of Angola in the south-west and Mozambique in the south-east of Africa, but their boundaries had never been strictly delimited and they were indeterminate on the landward side. Besides these two great blocks of territory she had sometimes occupied minor posts at the Bissagos Islands between the British colonies of the Gambia and Sierra Leone and at the mouth of the great unexplored river of the Congo.

Great Britain was the first power to dispute Portugal's extended but ill-supported claims, and she was moved by the desire to suppress slave-trading by half-breeds who were nominally Portuguese but in reality had no respect for governmental authority. The territory in question was a district known as Bulama within the Bissagos Islands and ultimately the matter was brought into arbitration before United States arbitrators in 1872 and

decided in favour of Portugal as maintaining an effective and continuous occupation of the disputed territory since its first discovery. The next dispute related to the more important question of Delagoa Bay to whose port of Lourenço Marques a track came down from Pretoria and opened a route into the Transvaal which did not pass through British territory. The dispute over the rival claims was brought to arbitration before the President of the French Republic in 1875 and decided in favour of Portugal as regards the north and west of the bay and for Great Britain for the southern shore. Similar arguments were employed as in the Bulama arbitration, and it was clear that the test whether a particular piece of territory was open for annexation or no was whether it was effectively administered and whether acts implying sovereignty had continuously been performed there such as the holding of courts or the collection of taxes. Her success in the arbitrations roused a new interest in Portugal in her colonies and she began to undertake ambitious schemes for the development of Angola and Mozambique through chartered Companies.

But the arbitrations also raised desires among projectors of other nations to acquire opportunities for the launching of schemes for developing African territories, and they tried to secure the support of their Governments for the furtherance of their schemes even at the expense of Portugal's claims or against the interests of the British merchants who had had few or no competitors in the trade of the unannexed parts of the African coast. Our merchants had never had active Governmental support and did not wish for it. They only desired to maintain the *status quo* wherein African trade was free to the merchants of all nations and none were excluded.

Meanwhile scientific and missionary circles were active in promoting the exploration of the interior. David Livingstone did more than any other man to reveal its geography and working inland from the Portuguese settlements between 1858 and 1864 he completed the exploration of the riverine system of the Zambesi by his mapping of the Shire and Lake Nyasa. About the same time Burton, Speke and Baker explored the great lakes in which the Nile takes its rise and besides revealing the negro Kingdom of Uganda they solved problems that had baffled geographers since the days of Herodotus. Livingstone started his last journey in

1866 with the design of discovering the drainage system of Lake Tanganyika, and for some years he was lost to view in the African wilds. The problem of his disappearance became a mystery of interest to the general public, and at length as a newspaper stunt H. M. Stanley was sent out to find him. In 1873 when he had proved that Lake Tanganyika emptied into a river that he believed was one of the headwaters of the Congo, Livingstone was met by Stanley but refused to return with him to civilisation. The whole episode created a public sensation and led to important political results.

The basin of the Congo was the only great area that still remained blank on the map of Africa and Stanley was resolved to explore it. He succeeded in interesting in his schemes Leopold II, King of the Belgians, and in 1875 he set out to reveal the whole course of the river from its headwaters to the sea. As the result of his discoveries it was shown that the basin was no desert like the Kalahari to the south of it or the Sahara, but an area abounding in primary products which might offer great opportunities to those who could exploit them. The news aroused Portugal to revive her claims to the region because she had posts at the mouth of the river and in earlier centuries had had close relations with the tribes of the "Kingdom of Kongo." France was also moved to action. She had long had a small and neglected colony to the north of the Lower Congo and from that base the French explorer de Brazza set out to reach the north bank of the river before Stanley could establish himself there. As he marched, he made treaties with the native chiefs by which they placed themselves under French protection, and the original narrow limits of the colony of French Equatorial Africa were very rapidly expanded to include a great area of newly annexed territory.

Meanwhile Stanley as the agent of the International Association of the Congo was establishing posts on the upper river as bases from which to control the opening up of the country. Nominally the association was an international body with purely scientific and humanitarian aims, but it very soon became merely a cloak to cover the schemes of Leopold II for the exploitation of the Congo. It was he who found practically the whole of the capital from his private fortune, and the financial interests who were also concerned worked behind him. Of course he could not have carried

out his schemes in the face of the opposition of the great Powers, but they cancelled one another out by their rivalry. Great Britain strove to negotiate a treaty with Portugal and promised to support her claims at the mouth of the Congo in 1883, but France secured German support against Britain in opposing this treaty and secured instead from Portugal an option of pre-emption on the colonies. If Portugal desired to retire from her African possessions, France would have the first chance of acquiring them and buying out the Portuguese rights. It was in these obscure and intricate intrigues that what was called "the scramble for Africa" began, and it is probable that it would not have been so extraordinarily rapid if the hands of the defender of the *status quo* had not been so full elsewhere. Britain was committed irrevocably to her task in Egypt by the beginning of 1883, and although it had been her own fault France was so estranged by what had happened that she was ready to further any anti-British plans. The opportunity was seized on the one hand by Leopold II to establish his new Congo Free State regardless of Portuguese claims, and on the other by Bismarck who was now ready to further the schemes for German colonial expansion that had long been pressed upon him by scientific geographers and economists.

It is impossible to trace the various obscure diplomatic tussles that were going on, and here it is sufficient to summarise their results. By the beginning of 1884 the German flag had been hoisted in Togoland between the British Gold Coast colony and French Dahomey, in the Cameroons where British merchants had been trading for many years, and in South-West Africa between the northern border of Cape Colony and Portuguese Angola. This latter annexation was a particularly severe blow to the colonists at the Cape who had often contemplated the annexation of that arid and barren area which, though of small economic value, lay in an important strategic relation to the colony and the South African Republic. But much indecision had marked the correspondence between the Colonial Office and the Governor of Cape Colony on the subject and when Germany formally asked the British Government in 1883 whether they possessed any rights of sovereignty in the region, they had to disclaim any pretensions and acquiesce in the entry of German troops and officials. In some ways this was the most disquieting of the new annexations, for

certain German writers foreshadowed schemes for carrying the new annexations as far as the Transvaal border and thus linking with the violently anti-British and elated Boers to form a Teutonic block right across the continent. The advance of trekkers into Stellaland and Goshen at this time may be recalled as pointers to the dangers to British rule in South Africa that might spring from the new German annexation. To shrewd observers like Cecil Rhodes the petty republics were no merely local encroachment at the expense of the Bechuanas; they might not be directly the result of a deep-laid German plan to cut off the approach from Cape Colony and its ports into Central Africa, but they would be a useful aid to such a scheme and it was this that aided to inspire his relentless opposition to the Boer claims.

Meanwhile, the old rivalry between French and British interests in West Africa had become far more acute than before and the British Government had to take definite action in a region that had been long the least regarded corner of the Empire. During the 'seventies the French under Faidherbe became very active in West Africa and great plans were conceived to carry the flag from Senegal to the Upper Niger and to link that colony up to Algeria across the Sahara Desert. Southwards Faidherbe planned to make the whole of the Western Sudan into a French protectorate and to link it up with the French colony on the Ivory Coast. This would surround the British colony of Sierra Leone and shut it off from the interior, but Britain was reluctant to extend her responsibilities in that unhealthy and neglected dependency. No active steps were taken to compete with France for the control of the interior and all that was done was to bring the native chiefs in the immediate vicinity of Sierra Leone and the Gambia into order under a loose form of protectorate. Thus gradually the French sphere of influence was extended all round the inner side of those colonies, and when in 1882 agreement was reached with France for the delimitation of their boundaries, they were shut in by the vast new African empire that she was building up with striking vigour and success.

The Gold Coast demanded more active official attention than did Sierra Leone. In 1871 the Dutch forts and factories along the coast, which were interspersed between the British posts and had always been a source of trouble with the natives, were purchased

and Britain thus consolidated her rule among the Fanti coast tribes, but this excited the Ashantis of the interior who had been receiving tribute from the Dutch. In 1873 they invaded the Gold Coast Colony in force, and it was not until the following year that they were defeated by Sir Garnet Wolseley who advanced with a small British force to Kumasi and compelled them to agree to terms. There was no intention of annexing the Ashanti kingdom and, when their submission had been secured, the British force evacuated the country and retired to the coast. There was little further trouble for the next twenty years, but in 1895 the Ashantis rose again and Kumasi had to be occupied once more before they would submit. This time the mistake of evacuation was not repeated, but the kingdom was converted into a protectorate and in the next year or two British influence was carried into the interior right up to the boundary of French territory. Thus the third of our West African dependencies was shut in by France, though to the east it was bounded by the small colony of Togoland which was annexed by Germany in 1883, as we have mentioned.

Further east it was our merchants who took action to guard their interests against French rivalry. The region of the Oil Rivers in the delta of the Niger to the east of Lagos (which had been occupied in 1861) had become a very valuable contributor to our African trade with its palm kernels which were the source of the lubricating oils now so much needed in the new age of machinery. The region was a no-man's-land in which the merchants of various European nations competed on a footing of equality for the purchase of the products collected by the negroes, but by the late 'seventies British trading companies were in a majority. The French then began to contest this predominance through larger companies assisted from governmental sources and it became evident that they were aiming at acquiring political control in order to match on the Lower Niger the success they were winning on the upper reaches of the river. To counter French competition George Taubman Goldie, one of the leaders in the trade, set to work to encourage amalgamation among the British companies and to secure official approval and help. The battle was joined with the French in 1879 and the next four years saw active commercial competition between the rival merchants in which the British were the more successful.

Our merchants did not appeal for active official help but built up their trade by purely commercial means. The natives found that they sold better articles at a cheaper price than their French competitors and that they might be relied upon to take all the produce that was offered them and give a fair return, while their ships regularly arrived to carry it away. The French, on the other hand, relied a great deal on their Government for subventions and support and when that became precarious in the period of indecision and disgust with colonial adventures which followed the failure of Jules Ferry's forward policy in Indo-China and Tonkin, they threw up the sponge. The French companies sold out their interests to Goldie's National African Company and the British were therefore left unchallenged on the Lower Niger.

This success proved a fact of great importance in the international negotiations for the stabilisation of the position in Africa which were undertaken in 1884 after the torrent of expansion of the preceding few years. Before we speak of them, however, we must return to the other side of the continent and note how a series of tragic events there tied Britain's hands in these negotiations and hampered her in guarding her interests against the expansionist powers. Under Ismail one of the most serious causes of waste of the resources of Egypt was to be found in his grandiose and ill-managed schemes to extend his dominion up the Nile through the Sudan to the new regions revealed by the explorations of Sir Samuel Baker as far as the equator. Baker was succeeded as Governor-General of the Sudan by the British Major-General Charles George Gordon, who had won a high reputation by his work for the Chinese Government in suppressing the Taiping rebellion. The Sudan was terribly misgoverned by Ismail's corrupt officials who connived at slave-trading and mercilessly extorted taxation from the unfortunate inhabitants and their local sheiks. Gordon laboured hard to reform this misrule and to suppress the slave-trade, but the task was too great and, when he retired after the fall of Ismail, the Sudan fell back into a worse condition than ever.

In 1881 there arose a fanatic Muslim prophet, usually known as the Mahdi, who roused the Sudanese to revolt against their Egyptian suzerain, and with his disciples, the dervishes, swept the country with religious revolt. An Egyptian force sent against them

under the command of Hicks Pasha was overwhelmed and massacred in 1883, and the Gladstone Government which, as we have seen, had just accepted the responsibility for Egyptian affairs, was faced with the difficult decision as to what was to be done. The task of suppressing a fanatical religious revolt in so difficult a country as the Sudan so far removed from our only practicable bases of operations at Alexandria and Cairo and on the Canal was far too great to be assumed lightly, and the Government came to the conclusion therefore that the Egyptian garrisons must be withdrawn and the Sudan abandoned to the Mahdi and his adherents. To carry out the withdrawal it was decided to employ General Gordon and, though probably with some reluctance, he accepted the task. Unfortunately Gladstone and his ministers underestimated its dangers and extreme difficulty and they left Gordon almost unsupported. Gordon was surrounded and besieged in Khartum and there in January 1885 he was overwhelmed and killed. While he was still beleaguered, a military expedition was sent out from Cairo to relieve him, but the difficulties of transport were almost insuperable and before the British troops could overcome them and approach the scene of action, the tragedy was over. Nothing could be done but to order retreat and British prestige suffered a blow that had far-reaching effects.

Before we speak of them, we must mention what was taking place round the entrance to the Red Sea where Ismail had also striven to undertake schemes for the expansion of Egyptian rule. He laid claim to all the western shores of the Red Sea and the southern coast of the Gulf of Aden, but did nothing more than establish small detachments at some of the small ports in those barren regions. France had had some claims to the port of Jibuti near the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb since the days of the Second Empire when Napoleon III was trying to establish strong points on the route to the southern entrance of the Suez Canal. But the French did little to develop those places and when after the Mahdi's revolt in the Sudan Egyptian power on the coasts of the Red Sea collapsed, the territory lay derelict and a new competitor came in to stake out her claims. Eritrea with its port of Massowa was seized and further east Italy proclaimed her protectorate over the coast of Somaliland right round the Horn of Africa. In the face of such annexations Britain was bound to take action

to protect her strategic situation on the Gulf of Aden. In 1884 she proclaimed her rights over the central part of the Somaliland coast with the best harbour in the region, the port of Berbera. Thus the scramble for Africa had begun in the east as in the west and it was necessary to take stock of what had already been acquired.

Bismarck had achieved such an advantageous position for Germany as an "honest broker" between the rivalries of opposing Powers at the Congress of Berlin in 1878 that he saw new opportunities in the African scramble for similar action. In 1884 he proposed to the principal nations a new Conference nominally to discuss the affairs of the Congo, but in reality to secure recognition of the annexations that had been secured by the principal competitors. The Conference took place in Berlin in 1884-5 and its public sessions were devoted to the elaboration of philanthropic principles concerning the relations of Europeans with African natives. They were largely derived from the doctrines that the humanitarians had been enunciating in similar language ever since the days of Buxton's Aborigines Committee, but they were merely a façade to cover what had been arranged beforehand in the private negotiations behind the scenes. There the Powers each grasped at exclusive advantage for themselves and the opportunity to exploit the wealth of Africa in primary materials.

The results of this diplomatic struggle were to be found in a compromise. The old idea that native Africa was no-man's-land in which all might trade freely and in which there was no European sovereignty was definitely abandoned. There was introduced instead the new principle of the "sphere of influence." If a Power had effectively occupied a portion of the African coast and maintained that occupation, then the "hinterland" or territory running inland at right angles to the main trend of the Coast was the sphere of influence of that Power and any interference by others would be an unfriendly act. It was clear that such hinterland could not be extended indefinitely far, for at some point it must reach the sphere of another European Power. Such inland extension was left vague for later negotiation between the Powers concerned, but the map of Africa, which in 1880 had been merely coloured here and there along the edge, in 1885 had become covered with a patchwork of territorial colours. The deadlock of opposing ambitions had left the Portuguese colonies still untouched and

Leopold II had secured his aims in the recognition of his Congo Free State, but many questions were still left unsettled when the Conference rose in the early months of 1885.

So far our attention has been directed only to what was taking place in Africa in these critical years, but it must not be forgotten that there was another region in which colonial rivalry was acute though to a lesser extent. The scattered island groups of the Pacific afforded few opportunities of profitable trade on any considerable scale, but their interest and their beauty made them well known. As early as the very beginning of the nineteenth century missionaries were sent out from Great Britain to Polynesia and a few years later Roman Catholic missions were sent from France to certain of the island groups. This led in the 'forties to a clash of political interests between England and France, for the latter offered official protection to the Catholic missions in the Society Islands (Tahiti) which had been the field of work of British Protestants for forty years. England had never accepted the offers of the Tahitians for annexation, but she was very reluctant to see her interests in the islands damaged by the protectorate that France proclaimed. However, the islands were not important enough to justify a quarrel and England had to acquiesce.

Similarly in the 'fifties when France annexed the island of New Caledonia to serve as a convict station, England had no grounds on which she could interpose. New Caledonia faced the coast of Australia and it was detestable to the people of New South Wales that so soon after they had purged themselves of the stain of convict transportation another Power should seize a Pacific island in their seas to be a prison for exiled criminals. The colonists protested vigorously to the British Government but in a time when England and France were negotiating for an anti-Russian alliance it was impossible to impede these negotiations by taking action against French plans in a distant ocean.

The settled policy was to decline all requests for British protection that were made by native chiefs in the Pacific usually on the prompting of the missionaries who were working at their civilising task in the islands. There were many reasons why such requests were made, but the most frequent one was to guard the islanders against the evils of the recruitment of labourers to work in

the Queensland sugar plantations. This traffic, usually called "black-birding," was carried on by unscrupulous adventurers among whom were many Americans and they kept the island groups in constant turmoil. Two of the most important groups of islands on the route between Australia and New Zealand and the coast of North America were Samoa and the Fiji Islands which had become the scenes of new planting industries. In Fiji there were constant disputes and scandals between planters and adventurers of various nations which made the islands a centre of disorder that was harmful to legitimate trade in all the neighbouring seas. The British Government was compelled at last to take action, and in 1874 it was decided to make an exception in the standing policy of non-intervention and to accept the surrender of their authority by the local chiefs into the hands of the Crown. The Fiji Islands were formally annexed and in 1875 a High Commissionership of the Western Pacific was established with its centre there to cope with the scandals of black-birding in Polynesia and to supervise the behaviour of British subjects in the islands of the area which were not under the control of any civilised Power.

The penal settlement in New Caledonia was a constant source of annoyance to the Australians, for not merely were there frequent escapes by the dangerous criminals there, the French officers in charge were constantly in trouble with the natives of the neighbouring group of the New Hebrides in their pursuit of the fugitives, French planters, often time-expired convicts, were also interfering in the islands to kidnap labourers or seize land, and the visiting ships of the Royal Navy and the few British missionaries working in the New Hebrides had much trouble. The Australians pressed the British Government to annex the group, but they would not accept further responsibility and all that could be done was to secure from France a declaration that they also would not take action towards annexation, and in 1878 this mutual abstention was recorded by the exchange of diplomatic notes. The task of preserving order in the New Hebrides was in 1887 jointly entrusted to the naval officers of England and France who occasionally visited the islands, but there was much friction between them until the conclusion of the *entente cordiale* between the two Powers after the opening of the twentieth century.

German merchants were trading in the Pacific islands in the 'sixties but it was not until Bismarck launched his colonial plans in Africa in the 'eighties that there was any official intervention by the German Government. In all probability their action in the Pacific was to some extent undertaken to bring additional pressure to bear on Great Britain to secure her pliability in the African scramble, though undoubtedly there were also economic causes at work, for the merchants of Hamburg were among the largest traders in copra, the principal product of the Pacific islands.

The largest area remaining unannexed in the neighbourhood of Australia was the eastern part of the great island of Papua or New Guinea and the Government of Queensland lying just across the Torres Straits had tried on more than one occasion during the 'seventies to secure its annexation to the British Empire. But the Imperial authorities refused to shoulder such a considerable burden without the assistance of the Australian colonies and they declined to agree. Early in the 'eighties, however, there were rumours that Germany had designs upon New Guinea, and Queensland without having received any authorisation from the Imperial Government took action and in 1883 proclaimed the annexation of the part of Papua lying to the east of the territory that admittedly lay within the Dutch sphere. To the great indignation of the Australians the Gladstone Cabinet refused to acknowledge Queensland's precipitate action, for even though that colony now expressed its willingness to bear part of the cost of administration, Britain was so deeply entangled in the African troubles and in Egypt that the ministry could not accept new responsibilities. In consequence when Germany justified the rumours that had moved Queensland to act by proclaiming her annexation of the north-eastern part of New Guinea and the neighbouring islands in August 1884 Britain had tacitly to acquiesce. In the following October British officials were sent to occupy the southern coast facing Queensland where we already had some trading interests, and in 1888 this coastal area was organised as the Crown colony of the New Guinea Protectorate. The delimitation between the British and German spheres of influence was effected by a treaty of 1886 by which Germany took many of the small island groups near the equator and the Northern Solomons while the Southern Solomons and neighbouring groups were definitely recognised

as lying in the British sphere. The whole of these actions was intensely disagreeable to the Australians who complained bitterly of Britain's supineness in thus admitting a most aggressive and unscrupulous competitor into regions which had long been regarded as lying within their orbit. Of course, the complaints were natural enough, but some of the trouble was fairly attributable to the parochialism and disunion of the colonies besides the extreme difficulty of the world relations of the British Empire just at the moment when Germany was ready to take action.

The years of the second Gladstone Ministry stand out as the most critical period of our imperial history in the nineteenth century and it is one of the ironies of fate that this should be so. The Prime Minister who almost prided himself on his ignorance of remote territories with unpronounceable names and lamented that the Empire was "too grievous a burden to be borne" had come into power with the proclaimed intention of limiting that burden. The attention of British people was to be concentrated on their own proper business, their internal affairs, and not dispersed over wasteful, imperialistic adventures. Yet when the Ministry was driven from power five years later the British Empire had been extended by a greater accession of territory and had accepted more responsibility for the administration of distant lands than in any like period before or since. But these acquisitions had not added to the prestige of the Empire and its rulers but had certainly detracted from it both in British public opinion and in that of foreign countries. Men did not think of the enormous areas brought under the British flag, but of those that had been abandoned. The surrender to the Boers in the Conventions of Pretoria and London, the acquiescence in German annexations in South-West Africa and New Guinea regardless of colonial interests, and the withdrawal from the Sudan and its abandonment to barbarism—these were the charges on the imperial account that were added to the burden of unpopularity that ministers had piled up in home and Irish affairs. The essential thing was that public opinion in Great Britain had been thoroughly awakened to the importance of the Empire to everyone in the British Isles. Never again could they leave imperial affairs to be only the concern of the specialists, and henceforward they were always near the

centre of British ideas. The great gathering of men from all parts of the Queen's outer realms at the Jubilee of 1887 drove home the lesson as we showed in our previous chapter and the Empire was launched into a new era.

CHAPTER XV

THE EXTENSION OF BRITISH RULE IN AFRICA, 1885-91

BEFORE we trace the results of the new colonial rivalry in East Africa, where they were somewhat later than in the west, we must return to take up the story of the events in South Africa after the Convention of London of 1884. The ambitions that promoted the partition of the west came from Europe and were directed to the aggrandisement or glory of a European nation. South of the Zambesi, however, it was from African sources that the forward movement received its driving force, and the history of the period is largely bound up with the clash of the rival ambitions and personalities of Cecil Rhodes and Paul Kruger.

During the 'seventies Rhodes laid the foundations of his vast fortune by organising the great De Beers Company which absorbed or bought out the smaller companies in the diamond fields, and the wealth and power he thus acquired furnished him the opportunity he desired to further his patriotic aims. He was passionately filled with the ideas of imperialism and he was determined from the beginning to open up the road from the Cape into the virgin territories of the interior where he looked forward to a vast new British realm. His way thither lay along the Missionaries' Road to the north by which Livingstone had gone to unveil the mysteries of the interior. In his wanderings when he had finished his work on the diamond fields Rhodes made himself familiar with the lands of which he dreamed and he grew to know intimately the Bechuanas and other tribes who lived there. But before he could move he must establish his base, for he realised that only from a united South Africa in which men of Dutch and British stock alike were working for a common end could the future advance be made secure. In 1883 he entered the Cape Parliament and there for the next few years he devoted his skill and inspiration to the politics of the Colony. There the Afrikaner Bond which had been founded for the expulsion of everything British from the country was gradually being drawn by J. H. Hofmeyr to constitutional and moderate courses, and step by step Rhodes and

Hofmeyr came to work together for the common good of Cape Colony and thence towards a federated South Africa.

But in the Transvaal there were rival ambitions, for Kruger and Joubert, the Boer leaders, aspired to carry their power east and west to the sea and thus to form a block of Boer territory right across the continent and so forbid any advance of British enterprise towards the interior. We have already spoken of the Boer advance into the republics of Stellaland and Goshen across the Missionaries' Road and how it was checked and turned back. Though Rhodes had as yet no official position, he played a very important part in repelling the Boer pretensions, and in July 1884 he was sent as Commissioner to Bechuanaland to deal with the difficult situation. He persuaded the Stellalanders to accept British allegiance, but he was less successful with the trekkers in Goshen and at that moment the proclamation of the German Protectorate in South-West Africa (August 1884) showed how threatening was the danger. The British Government was moved to take strong action and Sir Charles Warren was sent out to Bechuanaland in command of a force of British troops to secure compliance with the conditions that had been accepted by Kruger in the Convention of London. The President met Rhodes and Warren at Fourteen Streams on the disputed border between Bechuanaland and the Transvaal in January 1885. Rhodes took the lead in the discussions and before they terminated Kruger was compelled to abide by the conditions he had signed and to accept the delimitation of an unmistakable frontier. It was largely due to Rhodes's skill and tenacity as a negotiator that this result was achieved and the crucial victory won for his imperial idea. The road to the north was kept open for British passage and Joubert's expansionist and anti-British aims were blocked. The first round in the long tussle had gone to the imperialist from the Cape.

Kruger's acceptance of defeat was largely dictated by the knowledge that the South African Republic was practically bankrupt and that he had not the means to enter upon a struggle with Great Britain if she were determined not to give way and had the Cape Dutch behind her. But a great change was at hand. Before we speak of it we must note that in the territory of the Bechuanas Rhodes was confirmed in his belief that many of the troubles of South Africa were caused by what he called "the imperial factor,"

that is to say, the self-will of officials appointed from Great Britain who had not the understanding of local conditions possessed by South Africans. He differed from Sir Charles Warren over the recognition of land titles, for while the latter wished to confine them to men of British stock, Rhodes was sure that such a plan would be certain to raise the dangerous issue of racialism and to throw all the men of Dutch descent in South Africa into the arms of the anti-British extremists. Such a step would be fatal to the future of a united South Africa for which men of both stocks could work in unison without racial antagonism and he fought with all his vigour for his great ideal, and luckily he had his way. The Colonial Office did not support Warren, and the lands that were assigned to the white men were granted without distinction of race. But Rhodes could not persuade the Cape legislature to accept responsibility for the newly annexed territory and its southern part was therefore made into the Crown colony of British Bechuanaland, while the northern was confirmed to its native inhabitants under the rule of their paramount chief as the Bechuanaland Protectorate (1885).

Meanwhile the disappointed Transvaalers, who saw themselves being steadily encircled, were planning with German help to find an outlet to the sea in a new direction. Zululand was still independent and there German adventurers were intriguing to secure concessions at St. Lucia Bay which with Boer help from the Transvaal would interpose a wedge between Natal and the Portuguese possessions on Delagoa Bay. It is difficult to say whether this scheme formed part of a wider plan which as we shall see in a moment was being carried out further north in East Africa. German designs on the Middle Niger had been frustrated by the foresight and skill of Taubman Goldie and the next move in the complicated game that was being played ought to be far away and detract attention from the centre where the main acquisitions were sought. But the authorities at Cape Town were not to be caught napping as they had been in the previous year. Long forgotten treaties of the 'forties were produced showing that St. Lucia Bay had always been under British protection and in December 1884 it was effectively held by our troops. When German warships appeared off the coast they found themselves everywhere

anticipated. In the course of 1885 all the previously unoccupied coast between Natal and the Portuguese border was formally taken over and a British Protectorate proclaimed. Thus by the end of that year the whole coast of South Africa from the Orange in the west round to Delagoa Bay in the east was at last firmly held and there was no further room for foreign ambitions to the south of Angola and Mozambique. Zululand was placed under the government of Natal in 1887, but it was not actually administered till ten years later. Only Swaziland still remained unannexed and open to penetration from the Transvaal.

Before we return to South Africa and the momentous discovery of the richest goldfield in the world on the Witwatersrand in 1886, we must note what was happening in East Africa to the north of the territories under effective Portuguese occupation. The region was nominally in the possession of the Muslim Sultans of the island of Zanzibar lying off the coast. They were Arabs who had come down from Muscat at the entrance to the Persian Gulf and had swept out the last remnants of the Portuguese possessions there at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The region offered few opportunities for profitable European trade but it was the source of a large traffic in slaves which were carried by Arab traders to Persia and the neighbouring Muslim countries. Their raids into the interior kept the whole region in a terrible condition of anarchy and devastation and it was to bring this slaving to an end that Great Britain first sent her officials to Zanzibar. The later years of Livingstone's life were spent in attempting to bring the slave raids to an end, and in his travels he revealed the geography of East Africa from Portuguese Mozambique northward to the latitude of Zanzibar and the port of Mombasa on the mainland which was the centre of the Sultan's authority on the coast but was a notorious slave-trading mart. The exploration of the northern part of the region up to the Great Lakes which were the sources of the Nile was carried out, as we stated in an earlier chapter, by Burton and Speke and other British explorers who visited the negro kingdom of Uganda, but between these two areas much exploration had been carried out by German scientific expeditions and it was they who first discovered the great volcanic mountains of Kilimanjaro and Kenya.

Meanwhile the commerce of Zanzibar was rapidly increasing

and attracting concession hunters who scrambled to secure from the Sultan rights to exploit the new regions that the scientists were revealing in the interior. The only steady influence that aided the Sultan to guard his dominions against the dangers that threatened from this rivalry of greed came from one of Livingstone's men. John Kirk had accompanied him as medical officer in his exploration of the Zambesi and on his recommendation was in 1866 appointed Surgeon and Vice-Consul as assistant to the British Political Agent in Zanzibar. Thereafter for twenty years he played a central part in the history of East Africa and by his able advice to the Sultan helped him to give order and good government to his subjects and to cope with the difficulties that arose from his precarious position as an independent sovereign with vast but ill-defined claims over regions where he had no means to support them. In the middle 'seventies the first attack upon Zanzibar's nominal sovereignty on the mainland was launched from Egypt. The Khedive Ismail acting with the co-operation of his Governor-General of the Sudan conceived the grandiose design of carving out a new province from Uganda on Lake Victoria Nyanza south-eastwards across to the shores of the Indian Ocean. Egyptian troops were sent by sea to expel the Zanzibar garrisons from the small ports lying to the north of Mombasa and they were momentarily successful, but when Ismail fell in 1879 and Gordon left the Egyptian service, the plan collapsed. Kirk did his best to persuade the British Government to support the integrity of the Zanzibar dominions, for he believed that in that way the best means of suppressing slave-raiding could be achieved. Both French and German concession hunters were flocking round the Sultan attempting to secure exclusive advantages, but Kirk stood as a good friend at Bargash's side and the importunate sharks were held off.

Meanwhile a British subject, William Mackinnon, the ship-owner who had organised the British India Steamship Co. which carried a large part of the East Coast commerce, came forward with well-conceived plans for opening up roads from the interior to the coast to make the transport of commodities to the shippers easier. But in 1877 he broached a wider idea and made an unprecedented proposal to the Sultan for an all-embracing concession. Under it Mackinnon and his associates were to have the exclusive

right to construct roads, railways and telegraphs on the mainland, which was ordinary enough, but also to appoint Commissioners to administer the districts through which those communications ran, thus creating in reality an *imperium in imperio*. The negotiation for this vast concession at first went well, though Kirk had to warn the Sultan and the promoters that they must not rely on help from the British Government. Ultimately, however, the thing came to a standstill (1878). If, however, this first modern imitation of the old chartered East India Company had come into being, the whole vast area from the Great Lakes south-eastwards to the sea and from the Portuguese border in the south to Somaliland in the north would have come under British protection and there would have been no possibility of the partition of the next few years. It has been believed that it was the hesitation of the British Government that prevented the fulfilment of this dream, but in reality this was not the case. Its failure was due, on the one hand, to the unwillingness of the Sultan on second thoughts to relinquish so many of the rights of sovereignty and, on the other, to the hesitation of the financiers when they realised what immense sums would be required to set the Company going. The interest of the scheme, however, is the way in which it anticipated the Chartered Companies of a few years later.

The collapse of Mackinnon's scheme and the increasing pressure upon him led Sultan Bargash to make a direct appeal for British protection and in 1881 through Kirk he formerly offered to accept a protectorate with all it implied. But the Gladstone Government were not prepared to accept such a great responsibility however advantageous it might be to the commercial interests of England and India. Lord Granville, the Foreign Secretary, therefore replied in 1882 courteously declining to accept the proposed protectorate on the ground that by a treaty of 1862 Great Britain had agreed with France to respect mutually the independence of Zanzibar and all its territories and to do nothing to impair it.

The German moves of 1883 showed how dangerous was this attitude of indifference to the strategic importance of East Africa and in the following year the more far-sighted members of the Cabinet especially Chamberlain and Dilke protested against it and demanded action. But it was already too late to undo the harm that had been done. An Englishman, H. H. Johnston, who

had been sent out on a scientific expedition to Kilimanjaro formed agreements with the chief of an inland tribe for the cession of territory for a new colony regardless of the claims of the Sultan. Kirk advised the Government against their acceptance as infringing Zanzibar sovereignty. But Germany was not so scrupulous. In the autumn of 1884 a German agent, Dr. Karl Peters, landed secretly on the East African coast and marched inland to get into contact with the tribes of the interior. From the chiefs he encountered he secured treaties which rejected the authority of the Sultan of Zanzibar and ceded territory for German colonisation to Peters as representing the Emperor. Though neither Kirk nor the Foreign Office knew of these treaties, Peters carried them back secretly to Berlin while the solemn farce of the Conference was proceeding in a flood of words.

Bismarck saw the opportunity of putting the coping stone on the rudimentary colonial empire he had so rapidly acquired by a German possession in a highly strategic position. On the map it looked as though from the part of East Africa we now call Tanganyika the essential parts of the continent might be dominated besides giving Germany an outlook across the Ocean to India and Eastern Asia. A Press campaign was launched against Britain's so-called obstruction to Germany's progress, though, as we have already seen, 1883 and 1884 had seen our acceptance of her claims in South-West Africa, Togoland, the Cameroons and New Guinea and her readiness to join in the Berlin Conference with smooth words and no whisper of complaints. But that mattered nothing. The news of Gordon's death at Khartum and of our intention to withdraw from the Sudan had so damaged British prestige that Bismarck felt quite secure in proceeding with his plans. On March 2nd, 1885, the General Act of the Berlin Conference was signed and the delegates dispersed. On the following day the German Emperor published his formal incorporation of Karl Peter's organisation the German East Africa Company and his acceptance of the territories over which his treaties nominally gave him rights. Thus a new German Protectorate came into existence regardless of the claims of the Sultan of Zanzibar who saw his dominions taken from him without being able to raise a finger in their defence.

It was the worst blow that Britain had suffered in the scramble

for Africa. But though Kirk warned the Foreign Office that German ambitions were nothing like satisfied and that unless we took immediate action worse would follow, Granville would not realise the unpleasant truth. He still believed that Germany was only anxious to further the civilisation of the African without exclusive advantages and that she was anxious to co-operate with Great Britain for the philanthropic purpose of suppressing the slave trade. It was a touching example of the survival of the old delusions of the humanitarians into a more modern age, but its result was of the same effect as the ideas of Granville's more realist successor Lord Salisbury who came into power at the very moment of Germany's advance and of the pressure she brought to bear on Sultan Bargash to compel him to recognise the *fait accompli*. Granville flinched before Bismarck's masterfulness, Salisbury was ready to do a deal and to bargain distant and undeveloped lands for which he cared nothing for the withdrawal of German opposition in the Near East for which he cared a great deal. In either case Zanzibar paid, and so German East Africa was born. Having accomplished his purpose in the south Bismarck was graciously willing to acknowledge that Great Britain had special interests in the north. Under the doctrine of spheres of influence laid down at the Berlin Conference it was necessary therefore to secure a delimitation of the British and German spheres and negotiations for this purpose were begun in 1886.

Because France had been a guarantor of the independence of Zanzibar in 1862, she was invited to assist in its dismemberment and join in the Delimitation Commission. Portugal also desired representation, but she was shouldered out as having nothing but remote historical interests in the region. It settled down to a tussle between the German representative and the British, Colonel H. H. Kitchener, a rising soldier with a first-rate knowledge of Arabic who had served as intelligence officer in the force that attempted the relief of Gordon. He was deeply interested in the Sudan and the old schemes of linking it up by the Great Lakes and Uganda south-eastwards to the Indian Ocean. Ultimately it was agreed to compromise, Germany taking the south where Peters had been at work, Great Britain the north, the scene of Johnston's activities. Since at the moment Britain was needing German assistance against France's obstructiveness in Egypt, she

had to be complaisant, and there is no doubt that Germany got the better of the bargain though the suzerainty of the Sultan on the mainland was nominally retained.

But as circumstances changed in Europe so Germany in her turn wished to limit opportunities for colonial friction. Bismarck saw the French hostility to Great Britain over her occupation of Egypt gradually dying down and he feared a possible Franco-Russian rapprochement. In 1889 he therefore approached Lord Salisbury with a proposal for a defensive alliance against France and an offer to make a deal over the outstanding colonial questions especially in regard to Zanzibar. Salisbury, of course, refused the alliance but expressed his willingness to negotiate a colonial treaty. The negotiations were not completed until after Bismarck's fall, but the treaty was signed in 1890 and the map of Central Africa assumed the shape it was to retain until 1914-18. Germany secured the recognition of her sovereignty over what became known as German East Africa and in return for a money indemnity the Sultan agreed to the extinction of his rights. Similarly a British Protectorate was recognised over the region from Victoria Nyanza and Uganda south-eastwards to Mombasa and the sea. The island of Zanzibar and some neighbouring islands remained under the rule of the Sultan with a British Protectorate. As a sort of make-weight the small European island of Heligoland off the mouth of the Elbe, which had been occupied by Great Britain ever since the Napoleonic wars, was ceded to the German Empire.

Thus the scramble for the African coast was brought to an end with a complete delimitation of boundaries on the map. Their point of starting was certain but as they passed into the hinterland to mark off the respective possessions and spheres of influence, they became vague and uncertain on the ground and years of work were needed to translate into actual practice what had been marked on the maps of the diplomatists.

Though Portugal's right to her ancient possessions was recognised by the Powers and their boundaries on the coast were established, their internal extent was wholly undefined. According to her colonial enthusiasts the rights of the colony of Mozambique in the east stretched right across the continent until they merged with those of Angola in the west. The recognition of this claim would have repeated further north the danger that Rhodes had

guarded against by his work in Bechuanaland, for it would shut off his road to the north towards the Great Lakes whither, even thus early, he was dreaming of carrying a railway. He was determined that the recognition should not be accorded and that sooner or later he would secure from Portugal the renunciation of her claims over any land that she had not effectively and continuously occupied. The ten years from 1885 to 1895 were filled with his unremitting efforts to win a tongue of British territory from south to north right up to and across the Zambesi and to persuade the British Government to accept definite internal boundaries which would put a stop to covetous German intrigues.

His influence as a member of the Cape Parliament was steadily wielded in favour of a railway and customs union between the colony and the Dutch Republics, for he feared that if this were not established the Transvaal would find a new outlet and Cape Town would lose all the benefit of the valuable transit trade. In 1885-6 the railway stretched from Cape Town to Kimberley and Rhodes was negotiating with Kruger and the bankrupt Republic for its extension to Pretoria when a dramatic change came about that utterly altered the situation. On a barren upland ridge known as the Witwatersrand in the centre of the Transvaal there was discovered gold ore of a richness before which all previous discoveries paled. The ore demanded expensive machinery to mine it and complicated chemical processes to extract the gold. Large supplies of capital were needed and Rhodes and his associates from the diamond companies took a prominent part in seeking it on the European money markets and in organising the companies to carry on the new industry. Within a few months a large industrial population came flocking in to the new centre of Johannesburg that sprang up on the Rand and, being mainly of British stock, they formed an entirely alien element in what had till then been the sparsely scattered pastoral republic.

Where President Kruger had been almost without resources to carry on his government he now found riches pouring into his treasury at Pretoria from the dues charged upon the new companies for the concessions for their mines and the taxes raised upon the population of *uitlanders* who had gathered on the Rand. The Boers had not the experience or the organising ability to deal with such a situation and Kruger sought in Holland for men to

aid him in building up a new service of officials. Thus there gathered rapidly round him in Pretoria an entourage of Europeans that was intensely antagonistic to the mining magnates of Johannesburg. All their interest was concentrated upon securing communications with the outer world that would make the Transvaal independent of the routes that led to the ports of Cape Colony and Natal. The only possible exit was through Portuguese territory to Lourenço Marques on Delagoa Bay and thus the Transvaalers were encouraged to enter into negotiation with the Portuguese Government and to seek help in the Netherlands for the organisation of a Company to carry out the construction of a through line. The idea was not a new one, but in the days of the Transvaal's poverty it had not been attractive enough to financiers, now with the vast traffic for the Rand things were very different. The Netherlands South African Railway Company which completed its through line in 1894 was run by men of inveterate anti-British sentiments and together with a similar group who held a monopoly concession for supplying dynamite in the Transvaal it came to hold a position of formidable power in the State. It was faced by the group of mining magnates organised in the Chamber of Mines at Johannesburg and bitter duels were waged between them ostensibly round financial matters but with politics never far in the background.

In 1885 Kruger, as we have mentioned, was not averse to considering Rhodes's plan for carrying his railway from Kimberley to the north through Pretoria, but with the coming of the new era he took up an attitude of bitter hostility and Rhodes was driven to look to the west and think of a line through the Bechuanaland Protectorate though paying traffic would be almost lacking there. The line was gradually carried northward just to the west of the Transvaal border between 1889 and 1894 when it reached Mafeking. These railway projects had a far wider political importance than any economic reason and we have traced them because the contests over them were the evidence of the unceasing duel between Kruger and Rhodes and his dream of a great advance of British power into the virgin lands along the Limpopo, the Zambesi and beyond.

There lay the regions under the rule of the Mashonas and Matabele which were ruled over by their Great Chief Lobengula from

his kraal at Bulawayo. In 1886-7 adventurers from many quarters, Transvaal, German, English and Portuguese alike, were pestering him with offers for concessions and in the tussle Kruger's emissary was the first to succeed in getting a treaty on which the South African Republic could base exclusive claims to his territory. But Lobengula soon repudiated it and under Rhodes's influence signed an agreement by which he pledged himself not to grant any part of Matabeleland without the consent of the High Commissioner as representing the Queen (February 1888). To emphasise his determination not to admit interference a detachment of police was sent in from Bechuanaland, but Rhodes could not persuade the High Commissioner to accept the responsibility of annexing Matabeleland and Mashonaland without direct orders from the Imperial Government.

Those orders Lord Salisbury was not prepared to give, for he was certain that so great a direct extension of British annexation would arouse difficulties with Germany and Portugal and cut across the difficult questions that were involved in the boundaries of the new Congo Free State. But Rhodes was not willing to accept defeat and he determined to take private action where the Crown would not move. He sent agents to conclude an agreement with Lobengula whereby in return for the guarantee of an annual subsidy he granted to Rhodes and his associates full mineral rights in all his territories and promised to grant no land without their consent. Armed with this far-reaching concession Rhodes went back to the Colonial Office with a scheme for erecting a Chartered Company to work the concession under a charter from the Crown.

The idea was not unprecedented, for it had recently been applied elsewhere, though hardly on such difficult ground as in Matabeleland. The earliest successful example of the modern Chartered Company exercising governmental functions was the British North Borneo Company in 1881 but the most successful was the Royal Niger Company which was chartered in 1886 to work Taubman Goldie's concessions on the Niger. The British East Africa Company had been set up in 1888 to develop our new territories in East Africa on much the same lines as Sir William Mackinnon had planned for his abortive concession in 1887. There was strong opposition in London to the granting of Rhodes's application and it came from two sides, the Aborigines Protection

Society, which objected to all control by white men over native tribes, and the supporters of centralised Imperial control who believed that only Crown Colony government could ensure a proper regard for British interests. But a Crown Colony would inevitably make heavy demands upon the Imperial Exchequer, while Rhodes promised to find all the capital he needed from private investors. It was this financial consideration that induced the Cabinet at last to give its consent, and at the end of October 1889 a Royal Charter was granted to the British South Africa Company by which it was given full powers to govern and develop the country lying north of Bechuanaland and the Transvaal and to the west of the Portuguese border. Thus Rhodes gained what he wanted, a free hand to carry the British flag as far north as he could go without the hampering interference in detailed policy of the "imperial factor." He had at last shut in the Transvaal by British territory on the north as he had done on the west and thus called "Checkmate" to the expansionist policy that Joubert had pressed forward ever since Majuba. The expansion of South Africa was to be on South African lines for the good of all South Africans—not under the narrow and selfish Boer oligarchy of the Transvaal but within that wider British Empire of which Rhodes so passionately dreamed.

The occupation of the country was effected during 1890 by a specially raised force of South African Company's police under Rhodes's own carefully chosen leaders. One of his devoted friends, a young Scottish doctor, Leander Starr Jameson was sent to Lobengula who was persuaded to keep his warriors quiet and to reject the overtures of the Germans and Portuguese who were trying to excite him to resistance. Jameson was then sent to act as Administrator of Mashonaland and to counter the efforts of the Portuguese from Mozambique to extend their dominion right across the continent to the borders of Angola. They had already attempted to seize the Shiré Highlands and the region round Lake Nyasa where H. H. Johnston had already made agreements with various native chiefs. Lord Salisbury refused to recognise the Portuguese claims to regions they had never effectively occupied, and at length in 1890-1 he compelled Portugal to accept a treaty by which Nyasaland became a British sphere of influence and later a Protectorate and the boundary was fixed

between the Portuguese possessions and the territories of the British South Africa Company.

Thus by the year 1891, when the German treaty concerning Zanzibar was ratified, the map of Africa south of the Zambesi had been drawn in broad outline as it was to stand for the next quarter of a century. Rhodes had won his outlet to the north, but he had still to face a last danger. In 1891 the High Commissioner brought pressure to bear upon the Transvaal to prevent a threatened trek of Boers across the Limpopo into the fertile lands they coveted in Matabeleland, but two years later a more serious crisis arose when the Matabele rose against the Company's police and Imperial troops had to be sent up from Bechuanaland to aid in suppressing them. When all was quiet again, the territory was handed over to be administered by the Company, and the modern history of what was later called "Rhodesia" after its far-seeing founder began. The pioneers, who had occupied it and three years later had guarded its infant life against the savages, were disbanded to become its earliest settlers and to build up a new British South African community linked to Cape Town and the sea by Rhodes's railway and telegraph. The "Cape to Cairo" scheme was still a dream but a dream that had already in part come true, thanks to the genius of the greatest of "imperialists."

CHAPTER XVI

MIGRATION AND STAPLE PRODUCTION IN THE EMPIRE, 1870-1914

THE kaleidoscopic changes in the world map during the last quarter of the nineteenth century lend themselves to exact description, and the succession of events by which the European Powers acquired oversea possessions at a dizzy rate during the period can be traced systematically. In permanent historical importance, however, they are eclipsed by social and economic movements in the outer world that were so vast and yet so undramatic that they were hardly grasped by those who lived through them. Even to a later generation they defy summarisation and here we can only refer to certain aspects of them.

In almost every European country the population grew so rapidly during the period that it pressed upon the means of subsistence and drove emigrants forth in search of new homes where they could find more chances of betterment and a higher standard of life. Down to the end of the 'eighties the majority of Irish, English and Scottish emigrants went to the United States where they merged with those who left the older settled communities of the Eastern States to seek new opportunities in the Middle West and beyond the Mississippi. The rate of growth in the population of those regions was unprecedented. Only a minority of the emigrants from the United Kingdom went to the British colonies of settlement, the average between 1850 and 1880 never exceeding twenty-eight per cent. Their combined total was also, of course, divided into four streams—to Canada, the Australian colonies, New Zealand and South Africa respectively, so that the rate of increase in the population of each of those colonies of settlement was puny as compared with the phenomenal American figures.

By the end of the 'seventies almost all the good free land in the United States had been settled and the immigrants who wanted to take up homesteads began to move north over the Canadian border into Manitoba and then into the vacant prairie lands further west. Those regions were progressively opened up during the

'eighties and 'nineties, and with their free grants of land for homesteads they attracted many settlers from south of the American border as well as those who came direct from Europe. These Americans, with immigrants from Eastern Canada and the British Isles, played the leading parts in public affairs in the new communities that sprang up during those decades, so that in institutions and in externals they closely resembled the other colonies in British North America. But the other elements in the new population of the Prairie Provinces made them very different from the communities in Eastern Canada, which, being settled in the first part of the nineteenth century, had only an unimportant admixture of non-British stock. A new component with a different mentality was now added to the Dominion and whereas at Confederation its national opinion was moulded by the interplay of three factors, French-speaking Quebec, English-speaking Ontario and the Maritime Provinces, by the 'nineties Western Canada also contributed its influence and this was so different as to give a new turn to the life of the Dominion.

In 1870 when the prairies were taken over by the new Dominion there were less than 2000 white men in Manitoba with 10,000 half breeds and there were practically none elsewhere. By 1881 there were 66,000 white settlers in Manitoba and some were already beginning to move further west. The prairies, which had been only a solitude roamed over by the trappers and traders of the Hudson's Bay Company and by nomadic Indians who hunted the vast herds of buffalo, in the 'eighties were sending splendid crops of wheat southward from well-cultivated farms to be transported to the Chicago market by the American waterways and railroads. It will be remembered how this dependence of Western Canada upon the United States had been feared at the time of Confederation and how the construction of a railway link to Eastern Canada had been an essential condition of agreement. It is in the parallel facts of the building of this Canadian Pacific Railway and the discovery of the very high quality of prairie wheat that we can perceive the reasons for the sudden growth of the population of the prairies and the more rapid establishment of permanent and prosperous settlement there than in any other part of the Empire.

The railway was the essential agent in the development of the

country, though for many years it stretched only in a single line from east to west parallel to the American border at an average distance of about a hundred miles from it. Settlement was at first confined to a strip on either side of the line, for until long after its construction there were no branches. The east-west distribution of the population was very marked, but it was not evenly placed. To finance the construction of the line the Company had been granted alternate sections of land to use as security for loans, while the intermediate sections were parcelled out in free homesteads. Since it was these that were earliest taken up the settlements were at first strung out as separate beads linked by a single thread. This isolation greatly retarded the growth of cultural agencies, like schools and churches, and it was not until 1888 that settlement became more systematic and active. In that year an aggressive policy of advertising the opportunities of the West was begun in Eastern Canada. This proved successful in attracting farmers, from the older settled parts of the Dominion, and between 1888 and 1897 the annual rate of influx became five times what it had been during the previous decade. In 1896 Clifford Sifton, himself the first Westerner who had attained a leading position in Dominion politics, began to extend the advertising campaign to the United States, the British Isles and the continent of Europe. Agencies were established to distribute information and to assist emigrants, and a flood of printed material was poured out in which the possibilities of the West were painted in glowing colours with all the skill of the advertising agent. The pamphlets were profusely illustrated to attract the illiterate, and they were written in many languages, so that the peasants in many countries became familiar with the chances of betterment afforded in the "last, best West," and they flocked to the Canadian agencies set up in their own countries to get advice and help to carry them to the new Eldorado.

In the latter 'nineties the Canadian Pacific Railway Company and various steamship companies began to add their efforts to those of the Dominion and Provincial Government agencies. The C.P.R. was anxious to sell to settlers the lands that had been allotted to it, and, as free government lands could no longer be obtained close to transport facilities, would-be settlers were ready to purchase land from the railway agencies on favourable terms.

The steamship companies found their advantage in providing ocean transport for the emigrants, and at many ports in Northern Europe they set up machinery for their assembly and assistance and guided and guarded them to the Canadian ports whence emigrant trains carried them under carefully managed conditions to their prospective homes. In this way settlement was promoted in groups with less hardship and mischance than had to be faced under the haphazard individual emigration of previous generations. There was, however, the serious incidental disadvantage that the emigrants from particular countries settled in solid blocks round particular centres where they had little contact with the Canadian life around them. Thus in many parts the Prairie Provinces became a mosaic of separate communities with their own languages, customs and outlook. They lived under a Canadian system of government, but culturally they remained separate and were not absorbed into the life of the Dominion, thus giving rise to serious social problems that have not yet been solved.

The immigrants from the British Isles, however, did not remain in solid blocks like those from other countries, for, although in many instances they were brought in under group schemes, they soon blended in with the immigrants from Eastern Canada and the United States to build up the provincial communities which, as we have said, since 1900 have contributed so much to the life of the Dominion and as members of the British Commonwealth. The movements by which settlement in the Prairies has extended northward from the first settled border strip belong more properly to Canadian history, and for our purpose it is sufficient to emphasise the way in which this, the Third Great Emigration,¹ between 1888 and 1914, peopled such a large part of the vacant spaces of the Empire and made them its granary.

Colonisation by settlement is impossible unless the settlers can produce commodities in sufficient quantities to feed themselves and to sell profitably in other markets. If their production is only enough for the first purpose, the colonists' energies are fully occupied in subsistence farming leaving no surplus, and they are

¹ The First Great Emigration, 1629-1641, peopled the colonies of New England; the Second, 1820-1856, Eastern Canada and the colonies of settlement in the Southern hemisphere; the Third, 1888-1914, the Prairie Provinces. Emigration from the British Isles in the intervening years was at a much lower rate than during these out-surges.

unlikely to establish a progressive and prosperous colony. From the beginning, therefore, it is imperative to find a staple commodity which the colony can produce advantageously and in large quantity. The Australian colonies established themselves by their wool, Virginia by its tobacco and South Carolina by its rice. All these commodities found a ready market in Europe, and so they furnished the colonists with funds to purchase manufactured articles whether necessities or luxuries and to pay the interest on their loans. Now by the 'nineties it was abundantly proved that in their wheat the farmers of the prairies had such a staple. It gives a hard, dry grain which English millers found to grind well with the steel rollers that they were now using in place of the old millstones, and which blended well with the softer and moister English wheat to give a white flour, baking into an attractive white loaf with a golden brown crust.

Down to the early 'nineties it was from the United States that Britain obtained the greater part of her rapidly increasing consumption of wheat, but as the population there grew, the United States consumed more and more of the wheat produced and so from being Canada's chief competitor gradually fell out of the race and the Dominion became the chief granary of the world. It was at the beginning of the 'nineties that the stream of Canadian wheat to the United Kingdom began to increase fast, and by 1900 it had become a torrent. To produce the crop more and more land was taken into cultivation every year at an enormously accelerating rate. In 1897 less than 2000 new homesteads were taken up, in 1900 more than 5000, in 1902 more than 7000 and in 1903 more than 24,000. These round figures illustrate the great rapidity of the process of settling Western Canada and show how intimately connected were the rate of wheat production and that of settlement.

The effect of this development on other industries was most striking. To carry the wheat to the ports much railway and river transport was needed and the places of transshipment on the Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence and the ocean coast became very prosperous. The financing of the trade gave much business to the great Canadian banks and their British associates, and Montreal especially became even more pre-eminent as the busy centre for banking and insurance and other business than it had been in the

days when it managed the fur trade. To carry the crop across the ocean and to bring back immigrants and the manufactured goods required by the farmers employed the shipping industry to the full. It was mainly organised and managed from the United Kingdom, but after the opening of the twentieth century the Canadian Pacific Railway entered the field and built up a large and well-run fleet of liners owned and operated in Canada. Many of the manufactured goods required by the Dominion were imported from the United States, but from the 'nineties onwards the manufacturing industry of Eastern Canada advanced very rapidly and by 1914 it was occupying the first place in supplying the Canadian market—the United States and Great Britain following it in that order. To study the international economic complex and its evolution with any degree of comprehensiveness would demand the use of graphs constructed from accurate statistics, but they would be foreign to our present purpose, and for that the few foregoing general pointers must suffice. As examples they indicate that the real central feature of the Empire's history has been its essentially peaceful development, and they point to the kind of field in which that must be sought.

Just as the development of Canada is intimately associated with wheat, so that of Australia is bound up with wool. The rise of that industry belongs to an earlier period and has already been mentioned, but there was another most important industry that promoted the development of Australia and New Zealand during this period to which we must refer because it was parallel with the rise of Canadian wheat and like it furthered a rapid progress in the standard of living among the population of the United Kingdom in the years between 1890 and 1914, with the reflex action of promoting an increased flow of emigration to the colonies of settlement in the Southern hemisphere. The people who emigrated were not derived from the depressed classes, for those had not enough initiative to get away from their native slums and they had not the necessary amount of capital required for a fresh start in so distant a land, even when the Government gave liberal assistance to their passage money. It was rather the most enterprising among the agricultural labourers and the artisans of the towns who were moved to emigrate when they saw employment slackening and who decided to use their savings to help them towards the land

of promise which Australia was always supposed to be since the gold digging days of the 'fifties. The emigrants of the 'nineties made an admirable addition to the population of the settlements and they carried with them just the aptitudes and skill which were necessary to maintain the secondary industries which began to spring up behind the tariff walls that most of the states set up during the period. But secondary industries are only an accessory factor in the life of Australia and New Zealand whose wealth is derived almost entirely from their primary products. The early growth of their population was based upon the one staple, wool, and this continued as soon as the increase of the rate of emigration in the gold rush had died down.

Down to the last quarter of the nineteenth century when its fleece was shorn the value of a sheep was practically nothing. If it were slaughtered, its carcass had only a small value to boil down for tallow, and that was so little that the pastoralists usually got rid of the carcasses by burning them. Before 1870 the importation of meat into the United Kingdom was impossible; our population was entirely dependent upon home production and there was never enough to sell at cheap prices to the lower classes. During the 'seventies there was a certain amount of importation of live cattle from North America, but that type of traffic could not go on through the tropics and so Australia and New Zealand were entirely shut off from the British market, the only one that could absorb their surplus meat. The increase of meat eating in Great Britain began between 1865 and 1875. During that decade the meat-packing industry rose rapidly in the Middle West of the United States with its centre of organisation and operation in Chicago. There the pigs and cattle from the western states were slaughtered; the pork was cured into bacon and the beef packed into containers made of thin iron sheets covered with a layer of tin. The importation of this American bacon and canned beef into Great Britain rapidly increased the meat consumption of the working classes, and the trade was organised on an enormous scale with the United States still holding the pre-eminent position as the source of supply.

Neither Australia nor New Zealand at that period took much part in the canning industry, but their advance continued to be based upon wool, though that is not entirely true concerning

South Australia which also had considerable exports of wheat. But the rise of population promoted by the pastoral industry was gradual and it was only when the gold discoveries of the 'fifties afforded a new attraction that both the Australian colonies and New Zealand increased rapidly. By the 'seventies the diggings were no longer practicable for individual immigrants and the economic stability of the colonies was again based almost entirely upon wool and had a tendency to slacken. From the stagnation of the later 'seventies they were saved by a new staple industry, the production of meat, which was complementary to the production of wool and raised New Zealand especially into a new era of prosperity.

The change was dependent upon the invention of scientific processes of refrigeration in the middle 'seventies. They were applied first for the production of artificial ice, but about 1880 the processes were adapted to the holds of cargo ships and in 1882 the first ship thus fitted made an experimental voyage with a cargo of frozen meat from Dunedin in New Zealand to Great Britain. The experiment was very successful and it was the beginning of a veritable revolution not only in the economic position of the colonies in the Southern hemisphere, which were sunk in an almost hopeless depression, but also in their farming methods and organisation. They again became attractive to emigrants and just as wheat production led to the great emigration to Canada in the 'nineties, so the export of refrigerated meat led to a rise in the rate of growth of the colonies in Australia and New Zealand. At first the frozen lamb and mutton from the Canterbury Plains in the South Island and New Zealand could only find a market among the lower classes in Great Britain to whom cheapness was its most attractive quality. People who had never been able to afford much home-produced meat were added to the regular meat-eaters, but gradually the quality of the imported produce rose, the prejudice against it was broken down and the diet of the British people became much more diversified than it had been before. This process was accelerated when refrigeration was applied to dairy products like cheese and butter and later to fruit.

While the standard of living in the United Kingdom rose among all classes, the dependence of the Southern colonies on a single staple was thus gradually remedied to their benefit. In

New Zealand, for example, whereas in 1883 the value of the wool exported was nearly £4 million, frozen meat less than £120,000 and butter and cheese £50,000, twenty years later the export of wool was still worth about £4 million, meat £3 million and butter and cheese £1½ million. Twenty years later again, in 1923, wool had gone up to £11 million, and meat to £9 million, but butter and cheese reached £16 million. These round figures, which may be paralleled in Australia, indicate what vast changes had been produced by refrigerating processes as applied to transport and they necessarily led to corresponding social and economic changes both in the producing and the consuming countries.

Just as in the case of the Dominions space has forbidden us to give more than illustrative examples to show how the development of staple commodities has led to outstanding progress in the peopling of the Empire, so in the case of the dependencies we must confine ourselves to a few products of first-rate importance as illustrations of what has been going on with all its implications in providing increased material equipment for the world as a whole. Perhaps the most striking instances are tin as an example of the increase of metal supplies, rubber as an almost entirely new product and bananas as a new staple foodstuff.

Tin has been one of the most important base metals since early times, for it is needed to alloy with copper in the manufacture of brass. But the demand for it did not greatly increase until after the middle of the nineteenth century with the rise of the canning industry of which we have already spoken. The material of which the cans is composed is thin iron or steel sheet, but that cannot be allowed to be exposed to the air or to the juices of the foods that are canned, for it would rapidly rust. The iron sheets are therefore covered with a non-corrodible film of tin by dipping them into the molten metal. When the demand for tin began to increase in the 'seventies, the old supplies from Cornwall were stationary or on the decline and new sources of supply were sought elsewhere. They were found in Malaya where the work of pacification of the Straits Settlements was just getting into its stride. Chinese coolies began to come in to work the alluvial tin-deposits in the rivers.

They were followed by British-organised companies who introduced machinery and carried on the industry on a systematic and more extensive scale. The original exports from the Malay Peninsula

were negligible, but the rise of tin-dredging began to make the new protectorates prosperous and more populous soon after they were brought to order. Exactly the same thing occurred as in the colonies of white settlement. Only the finding of an exportable staple could lead to the building up of a strong, stable and prosperous community, and in Malaya it was tin that furnished the basis for new colonies. They were not colonised by white men but by Chinese immigrants for whom a few British officials and managers provided organisation, but the process was in essentials on the same principles as in the prairie provinces of Canada.

In the 'nineties the rise of the new electrical industry began to make enormous demands for novel brass alloys of which tin was still an essential component. These demands led to a further extension of tin-mining in Malaya, and after the discovery of tin deposits at Bauchi in Nigeria in 1912 they led to the rise of a new mining industry there with striking effects upon the prosperity of that region. To exploit the mines railways were necessary as they had been in Malaya, and so railway construction demanding the work of British factories, which had previously called for much government assistance, became profitable and could readily command supplies of capital. As an illustration of similar results in like circumstances these examples can hardly be bettered.

Returning to Malaya it is striking to note that whereas its great modern development was at first based on one staple, tin, it was greatly extended by another which is almost a new commodity in the world's markets on its modern scale of production. Down to the closing years of the nineteenth century the small amount of indiarubber (as it was then called) that was marketed came from the Brazilian forests and was collected in a very primitive fashion by uncivilised Indians. But in that decade various attempts were made to rear indiarubber plants by cultivation and among others certain coffee planters in Malaya, who were dissatisfied with the prices they were getting for their coffee, determined to seek new cultures and notably tried rubber planting. The use of rubber for the pneumatic tyres of bicycles was just beginning, and a little later with the coming of the automobile an expanding market for rubber for the manufacture of tyres for motor cars was opening about 1900. The cultivation of plantation rubber was rapidly established on a profitable basis in Malaya and between 1900 and 1910 the

cultivated product entirely outstripped the original forest-produced rubber. An enormous expansion of plantations took place in Malaya, large areas that had previously been given over to jungle and forest were opened up and planted, and there was an immensely increased demand for labour. New Chinese and Indian immigrants came in to supply it, and the prosperity of the whole Peninsula was greatly increased, of course much to the benefit of its greatest port and commercial mart, Singapore.

This must suffice as a single example, for space does not permit us to trace the rise of the cultivation of other natural primary products during the last forty years which have fostered the development of our imperial dependencies. Palm oil and kernels from West Africa and copra from the coconut palm in many of the dependencies have been used on a steadily expanding scale for the manufacture of a new foodstuff, margarine; oil seeds of various sorts have been developed to provide lubricants for the immense developments of machinery that have taken place; while foodstuffs that half a century ago were produced on a comparatively small scale, like cocoa, have been developed at a greatly accelerated rate; they have ceased to be luxuries and have become necessary articles in the normal diet of the population. The production of such staples has given to many colonies sufficiently elastic sources of revenue to admit of expenditure on schools, hospitals and health services and other civilising agencies which could never have been provided otherwise.

But this necessary dependence upon primary products may be very dangerous when excessive competition from other sources floods the world market or when the consuming countries fall into depression and are unable to buy the accustomed quantities. Of the classic example, sugar in the West Indian colonies, we have already spoken, but we may choose as our final instance the crop upon which the distressed colony of Jamaica has based a large part of its industry in recent years. Down to about 1880 the banana was little known in England and what supply of the fruit was brought to this country came from the Canary Islands and it was regarded as an expensive luxury. But bananas grow wild in the West Indian jungles and it was from them that a new industry sprang. In the later 'eighties, when Jamaica was in the depths of depression owing to the decay of the sugar industry, much of the

petty commerce of the island was carried on by small ships from Boston and other New England ports. The masters of these ships sometimes carried home with them small parcels of wild bananas as presents for their friends. The journey was just long enough to ripen the fruit, and bananas largely caught the public taste in Boston. In the 'nineties the import of bananas into the United States was organised on a commercial scale by various small companies, and their employees began to encourage the planting and cultivation of banana trees on abandoned sugar plantations in preference to the haphazard collection of the wild fruit. By 1899 the various smaller companies had coalesced into the larger organisation of the United Fruit Company of Boston and bananas had become a regular article of diet in the United States. They were longer in coming into use in the British Isles and later still on the continent of Europe. Step by step, however, an enormous organisation was built up by the United Fruit Company for the production of the fruit, its export in the Company's own ships and its marketing in various parts of the world. The banana crop is now of first-rate importance to Jamaica and has relieved its dangerous earlier dependence on sugar. The application of scientific investigation to selection of stocks, their cultivation and protection from disease and insect pests has had a great effect on the extension and improvement of the crop.

The carrying of these greatly increased and diversified supplies of foodstuffs demanded a new organisation of British shipping, and whereas before 1880 a large part of our carrying trade was done by ships owned by small firms, it gradually passed into the hands of large companies. Some owned both large regular liners, engaged on particular routes and passing along them at times as carefully scheduled and kept to as railway trains, and cargo liners usually also engaged on particular routes. Besides these there are, of course, immense numbers of smaller cargo steamers sailing upon charter to ports where cargoes can be obtained, and for the organisation of these functions there has been a vast increase in the work of bodies like the Baltic and Lloyds. These institutions are much older than the modern developments of world trade, but it is in the modern period that their organisation has been carried to its present complexity and subtlety.

Parallel with all this there has been a like extension of methods

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for carrying on the financing and insurance of inter-imperial and international trade, but it is impossible here to describe it even in outline. What is important for us to remark is that it is through organisation of this sort that a great deal of modern imperial development has been made possible, so that it is almost a platitude to say that the average man or woman intuitively understands that he or she is no longer merely a citizen of an island kingdom or a distant Dominion but a unit in a world-wide empire. The psychological effect of such a realisation has been of immense importance in furthering the idea of imperial unity independent of constitutional and political machinery, and it is for that reason that it is emphasised here.

CHAPTER XVII

JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN AND THE EMPIRE, 1886-99

THE great movements of empire development have rarely been particularly associated with compelling personalities, as the Abolition movement was with William Wilberforce; they have progressed by the efforts of the many and not by the inspiration of the few. Thus the story of the Empire is largely impersonal, save in its anecdotes. There is one outstanding exception, however, for in the ten years 1895-1905 everything imperial seemed to centre round the minister who held the Colonial Secretaryship, Joseph Chamberlain. His ideas and his incisive policy give a central theme round which all the happenings of a very complex time seem to fall into place, and we may therefore trace the events of the period in roughly chronological order.

In his early municipal and political career Chamberlain's thoughts were mainly directed to social and economic questions in which he gradually broke away from the *laissez-faire* attitude of his party and with his realist and constructive temper sought for ways by which governmental action could alleviate the evil conditions of our social system. He took no prominent part in the discussions of foreign and imperial policy during the 'seventies, but in the second Gladstone Cabinet along with Sir Charles Dilke he stood out for imperial ideas and an active policy of defending British interests in the face of foreign attack. Thus he was the leading spirit in the Cabinet who screwed it up to the occupation of Egypt and repeatedly opposed Gladstone's and Granville's weak and temporising measures.

It was he who pressed on his colleagues the acceptance of new colonial responsibilities in the scramble of 1883-5, and occasional passages in his speeches both in Parliament and on political platforms show how he was tending to recognise the development of the Empire as one of the most important questions of the time. Though the term was hardly in use at so early a date, we may justifiably say that he was a Liberal Imperialist even before his

break with Gladstone over the question of Home Rule for Ireland.

It was his belief in a "united empire" that in a large measure inspired him to oppose Gladstone in his bargain with Parnell and carried him and his associates after the split of 1886 into a new Liberal Unionist party with strongly imperialist principles. He took little part in the controversies over Fair Trade, though as early as 1882 he maintained that an imperial *Zollverein* might be good for the Mother Country and the colonies alike, now that the predictions of the Cobdenites of universal free trade were clearly false. To safeguard the possibility of such an imperial *Zollverein* he was strongly opposed to the inclusion in our commercial treaties of clauses that would hamper the grant of preferential duties to or by the colonies, and such indications are of interest as indicating the gradual development in his mind of the concrete forward imperial policy that he planned during the years between 1886 and 1895 when he was out of office.

The split in the Liberal party did not carry all the Liberal Imperialists into the Unionist camp and so lead to a revival of a struggle on party lines about imperial affairs. Lord Rosebery, the Foreign Secretary in Gladstone's Cabinet of 1892 and later his successor as Prime Minister, held strong imperialist opinions and his junior colleagues Asquith and Edward Grey were also opposed to the views of the "Old Guard" who still held to the traditional Little Englandism of the Liberals of the 'sixties. Thus the dividing line on imperial policy was not between Ministerialists and Opposition but within the bosom of the Liberal party and Cabinet. The battle was joined on the African Protectorates.

In 1890 Dr. Karl Peters strove to repeat in Uganda the tactics he had employed in 1884-5 by obtaining from local chiefs concessions on which territorial claims might later be founded. The Anglo-German treaty of 1891 disappointed these hopes, and Uganda was left unmistakably within the British sphere of influence. But the question of what was to be done with it remained to be decided by the Gladstone ministry, for the British East Africa Company had insufficient resources to carry on its administration or to construct a railway to the coast. Application was made for Government help, but Gladstone, Sir William Harcourt and John Morley were in favour of refusing it and withdrawing entirely from

Uganda, which would then almost certainly fall to Germany. But Rosebery and his imperialist colleagues stoutly refused to give way. Uganda was taken over from the Company, and a little later, when Rosebery had succeeded to the Premiership, he secured from Parliament a grant in aid of the construction of the Uganda Railway, a trunk line from Mombasa into the interior, which was the essential requirement to open up the British East African Protectorate and render its economic development possible.

It was in the parliamentary battle over this question that the real line of division on imperial policy was revealed. Rosebery and the Liberal Imperialists could command the support of the Conservatives and Chamberlain and his Liberal Unionists, who took a prominent part in the debates. They strongly approved of Rosebery's pronouncement in favour of a continuity of imperial policy irrespective of what party was in power, and thus, when the Liberals were defeated and went out of office in 1895, the Unionist ministry which succeeded them could carry on their measures in imperial affairs without a break. Similarly the measures which Rosebery had taken for the reorganisation and strengthening of the navy as the essential weapon for imperial defence could be carried on and extended, and thus the short Liberal administration had made no breach in the progress of the imperial idea which had begun in earnest some ten years before.

With Chamberlain's enormously increased interest in the Empire it was natural that when he consented to take office under Lord Salisbury he should wish to assume the direction of our imperial policy. Thus there began the most notable Colonial Secretaryship of our history. Instead of the politicians of the second rank who had held the office in previous ministries, it was now filled by a statesman of international reputation, who by his driving force and his skill in debate was able to carry with him the House of Commons and public opinion outside in favour of a constructive imperial policy in place of the rather listless opportunism which had been too much the characteristic of the Colonial Office in the past. The Unionists took office in 1895 and in August the new Colonial Secretary proclaimed what was to be the key-note of his policy and that for which it would be remembered if it had not been eclipsed by the storm that broke in South Africa

before the end of the year. We may therefore consider this aspect of his administration first.

In Chamberlain's view many of the British dependencies resembled undeveloped estates that were neglected by an absentee landlord, and they were estates that could not be developed without direct government assistance. There were colonies that had been under the British flag for more than a hundred years, yet our rule had done absolutely nothing and if we withdrew they would be left in the same condition in which we found them. He promised to view sympathetically any case in which by the judicious investment of British capital the dependency as an estate of the British Crown might be developed for the advantage of its population and for the benefit of the rest of the Empire and the world outside. Such utterances show how far Chamberlain had moved from the once sacrosanct doctrine of *laissez-faire* and how realist and constructive were his imperial ideas. We can hear in them the echoes of the discussions over the Uganda Railway, but it was in that Cinderella of the Empire, the British West Indies, that the new policy was first applied.

The West Indian sugar colonies had been sinking deeper and deeper towards public and private bankruptcy all through the nineteenth century. Their partial recovery from the blow of slave emancipation of 1833-38 had been halted by their failure to compete with the undercutting of slave-grown sugar from Cuba and Brazil, which was admitted free to the British market after the coming of free trade, but a knock-out blow was launched against their recovery of even a modest degree of prosperity by bounty-fed beet-sugar from the continent of Europe after 1870. Many European countries were encouraging the production of beet-sugar by the grant of export bounties which enabled the sugar to be sold on the British market at very low prices, often below the cost of production. Sales of beet-sugar came to exceed those of cane sugar and while the peoples of the British Isles were thus taught to be the greatest eaters of sugar, jams and sweets in the world, the results were catastrophic for the islands with their dependence on a single staple. In the seventeenth century the British West Indies had produced considerable quantities of cotton and tobacco, but they abandoned these cultures when they turned their land entirely over to sugar cane.

Chamberlain's remedy for the poverty and social neglect into which the colonies had fallen was not a single or *ad hoc* palliative, but a carefully thought out and wide-spreading policy of guidance and assistance to all the dependencies. In some points the measure taken only applied to particular cases, but in the majority a general policy could be adopted to increase the prosperity of all, which only needed slight modification to adapt it to local circumstances. The essential difference that marks off Chamberlain's tenure of the Colonial Secretaryship as the beginning of a new era from the hand to mouth earlier administrations since James Stephen's time was that he thought out a policy and consistently applied it.

Space will not admit of mention of particular instances and we must confine our attention to one or two of the broader aspects of the policy as it concerned the dependencies. The first of these was the determination to get rid of the artificial obstacles that had been placed in the way of the development of the imperial estate. It took seven years of difficult and embarrassing negotiations with foreign Powers to secure the abolition of their bounties on the export of beet-sugar, and it was not until 1902 when Great Britain, having failed to persuade them to take action, prohibited the importation of bounty-fed sugar that they were compelled to realise that we meant business. This was the first breach in the old *laissez-faire* policy of free imports upon which other nations had presumed to serve what they thought were their own interests.

There were other causes for the decay of the West Indies besides the bounties, but most of them were connected with the fatal dependence of those colonies and Mauritius on a single staple. The cane-sugar industry had been very unprogressive in improving its culture and methods of extraction. In 1898 an Imperial Department of Tropical Agriculture was established to carry out researches into the best varieties of cane to plant and improved methods of cultivation. The insect pests that infected the crop were investigated and methods studied and popularised by which they could be guarded against and overcome. Chamberlain persuaded the House of Commons to provide subventions to carry on this work and to improve the means of communication by which the crops could be brought from the plantations of the interior to the shipping ports. In place of the small sugar mills,

where the sugar was extracted from the cane with primitive and wasteful appliances on single plantations, the erection of central factories was stimulated where modern machinery and scientific methods might be used. In 1899 an Act was passed under which loans might be made to Crown colonies at the low rate of $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. for the improvement of transport, and by virtue of these loans many railway projects were undertaken which would have been impossible if they had had to be financed on the open market or from the slender resources of the colonies themselves. Many efforts were made to introduce new cultures into the sugar colonies, and though it was not until after this period that they attained notable success with the extension of the banana crop as we saw in the previous chapter it was under Chamberlain that the first systematic steps were taken which led to the rise of the sugar colonies from the depths of depression into which they had sunk.

Alongside these measures for the economic rehabilitation of the Crown colonies very important new departures were made to place the medical services of the Crown colonies on a better and more scientific footing. Schools of Tropical Medicine were founded in London and Liverpool under the direct inspiration of the Colonial Secretary and by research into medicine and hygiene methods were introduced which began to remove the reproach that some of the Crown colonies were among the most deadly places for the white men who had to serve there. By such means as these and by administrative improvements the conditions of the Colonial Service were greatly ameliorated, not only to the advantage of those who belonged to it, but also to those for whose well-being they were responsible.

Though the Sudan and Egypt were not the concern of the Colonial Office, Chamberlain took a large part in the decision of the Cabinet to recover the Sudan from the merciless tyranny under which it had fallen after the Anglo-Egyptian withdrawal. It was typical of Gladstone's lack of understanding of imperial problems that he should have excused that step as one of liberation for a people "rightly struggling to be free." In reality the country was mercilessly devastated under the fanatic dervish hordes, and to redeem its inhabitants from their cruelties became one of the earliest tasks undertaken by the Unionist Government when it came into power in 1895. It was realised that everything

depended on transport, and the task of organising it was entrusted to Sir H. H. Kitchener who had been the intelligence officer of the unsuccessful expedition for the relief of Gordon ten years before and was now Sirdar of the Egyptian army. He was thoroughly familiar with the country and its people, and with their assistance he carried a railway step by step up the Nile valley by which troops and munitions could be transported without depending entirely upon the uncertain and winding river. During 1896-8 he systematically approached the enemy whom finally he overwhelmed at Omdurman outside Khartum. The capital fell into his hands and the dervish power collapsed. The task had been accomplished by British and Egyptian troops acting in concert and the gradual process of rehabilitating the Sudan was undertaken under the two flags flying side by side. The legal status of the recovered country was anomalous, but the need was to achieve practical ends and the administration was entrusted to a Governor-General appointed by the Khedive on the nomination of the British Government. In practice this gave complete control to Lord Cromer for the carrying-out of the policy he had planned. The Anglo-Egyptian Sudan was an autonomous entity in which the administration was placed under a specially chosen Civil Service of British officials and the country was rapidly pacified and launched upon the road of progress.

Just before Kitchener had won his victory at Omdurman an incident occurred that might have had dangerous consequences from the clash of the French and British advances in Africa. We have already mentioned how France was building up a vast new African empire in the Western Sudan and how her officers were carrying the tricolor right across the continent from Algeria southwards to the Upper Niger and thence to the Ivory Coast and Dahomey and eastwards from the Senegal to Timbuktu and beyond. In command of one of the small armed parties by which this work of penetration was being carried out Major Marchand came from the west down to the waters of the White Nile in the summer of 1898 after an adventurous three years' journey. When it had begun, the Sudan was still abandoned to the Khalifa, and ambitious French officers conceived the design of carrying their adventurous advance all the way across the continent to Jibuti at the mouth of the Red Sea and thus shutting off the British in

occupation of Egypt from the Great Lakes. But when Marchand arrived at Fashoda, Kitchener had almost completed his task and he at once proceeded up the river to protect British rights. The Frenchman could not persist in the face of the overmastering claim that the whole of the White Nile belonged to the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, and he accepted Kitchener's offer to convey him to Cairo on his way back to France. The incident aroused some heat among the French and British public, but that soon passed away, and its result was the mutual recognition of the respective limits of the spheres of action of the two Powers in North Africa, the whole of the region draining into the Nile being under British influence while the French had all to the west as far as the Atlantic for their sphere of action. Thus Britain had no further competition to fear along her trunk route from Uganda and the Great Lakes to the Mediterranean, and it was only in Egypt that difficulties still remained between France and Great Britain.

When British forces first occupied Egypt it was formally stated that the occupation would only be temporary and that, when the country had been restored to order, we should withdraw. That assurance had been repeated more than once, but no definite time for the withdrawal had been fixed, and this led to constant bickering and much French irritation. Egypt under Lord Cromer was gradually restored to prosperity, but the task was much impeded by the exceptional privileges accorded to foreigners in matters of justice and finance. France was always the leader in the complaints against the Khedive's Government for the non-observance of the tangled rights of foreigners, but Cromer's patience and ingenuity secured that the difficulties should never reach the danger point, and so matters remained. The material prosperity of the country increased steadily under the skilled competence of the British Resident and his assistants who worked nominally as the advisers of the Egyptian ministers but in reality controlled the whole administration. Whereas at the beginning of the 'eighties Egyptian bonds had been almost worthless, in twenty years their credit had been raised enormously; there was the security under which commercial enterprise could flourish and great works of irrigation and transport raised the produce of the country many-fold. The fellahin were saved from extortion and oppression, and in every way their material condition and prosperity were

improved. The whole of this work was infused with the same constructive spirit as that which Chamberlain was applying to the development of the dependencies, and we can undoubtedly see in what was done the inspiration of his imperialism which was shared by many of those who, like Alfred Milner, took an active part in carrying it into practice. As all this went on, so the date of the British withdrawal from Egypt receded into a remote and uncertain future and the Unionist Government was studiously vague in its answers to France's representations that it should be definitely fixed.

Our survey of these Egyptian affairs may have seemed to carry us away from Chamberlain's work for the Empire, but in reality as a leading member of the Cabinet he was intimately concerned with the policy adopted. It was a side of his work of great importance and should not be forgotten when we turn to the other end of Africa and look at what was going on there during this critical period.

When Chamberlain became Colonial Secretary in the summer of 1895, there could be no doubt that the most menacing difficulties that he would have to deal with were in South Africa, where for ten years the political situation had been steadily deteriorating. Things in the other self-governing parts of the Empire were moving smoothly; Canada, Australia and New Zealand were rapidly rising in material prosperity and politically they were progressing steadily towards nationhood. India was at peace and even on the troubled north-west frontier there were no longer the fears of Russia's advance that had been acute a decade earlier. It was only in South Africa that there were imminent problems of first-rate magnitude, and before the new Colonial Secretary had been more than a few months in the saddle he was plunged into the greatest difficulties of his career.

At the Cape Cecil Rhodes was now Premier with the support of the Afrikaner Bond led by Hofmeyr, and he had won general approval for his policy of co-operation between the peoples of both Dutch and British stock for material improvement, the benefit of all. He won general support, too, when he stood out against President Kruger's policy of favouring the Netherlands South African Railway to Delagoa Bay as the route of entry for overseas goods to the Transvaal to the detriment of the ports and railways

of Cape Colony. In pursuit of this policy the President placed prohibitive rates on goods transported over the short part of the route from Cape Town to Johannesburg through Transvaal territory. The importers refused to yield to this extortion and unloaded their goods at the border into waggons to pass the river by the Drifts (i.e. fords) and complete their journey to the mines by road. Kruger countered by prohibiting the passage of the Drifts by the waggons so as to drive the traffic back into the hands of his protégé, the Company. The action was in direct defiance of the provisions for free communication embodied in the Convention of London, and Chamberlain for the Imperial Government with Rhodes's support from the Cape firmly demanded the withdrawal of the prohibition. In the face of an implied threat of action by force if the demand were not acceded to the President had to give way. He knew that he had not sufficient force at his back to enter upon war and his extremist supporters learned their lesson (August-December 1895).

Rhodes had won another round in the long fight, and it may be that he was thus emboldened rashly to try to drive home his victory to a conclusion. He was not only Premier of Cape Colony but the unchecked head of the British South Africa Company, so that he apparently had all the winning cards in his hand. The next few months were to see them all scattered to the winds. In the ten years since the opening of the Rand mines the population which lived by and round them had grown until it numbered half the white men in the Transvaal. But these "uitlanders" were deprived of all political rights, and as time went on the Hollander and German employees of Kruger and his ruling oligarchy were unceasingly devising new oppressive and extortionate measures against them. Constitutionally prepared petitions and representations from them were contemptuously rejected and the leaders of the mining community were reluctantly convinced that nothing could be gained by merely constitutional methods. About the time of the Drifts controversy they began to think seriously of revolutionary action to seize the Government. At the beginning of 1895 Kruger had boasted publicly of his hope and expectation of help from Germany to release the South African Republic from its encirclement by British territory and the shackles of the Convention. The final blow was struck at all the moderate uitlanders'

hopes of the success of constitutional methods for securing redress of the even more grievous burdens laid upon them when in August the Volksraad rejected with derision and insult a monster petition signed by all the responsible elements on the Rand. This convinced their leaders that they must take more drastic action not only for their own interests but to save South Africa from a German intervention that might be fatal to the British Empire.

Rhodes was vitally interested in all that was happening in Johannesburg, for not only had he great financial interests in the mining industry, but, far more important to him, he believed that all his hopes for a South African federation within the Empire were at stake. He made liberal contributions to the funds of the conspirators and sent trusted friends to London to make confidential soundings. But Chamberlain with strict propriety would listen to nothing that did not reach him through official channels, and Rhodes went on with his own secret plans. The rising had been fixed for December 28th, but as the day approached the enthusiasm of the conspirators waned. The Transvaal Government was forewarned and assembled its forces to deal with any outbreak, and, on the 29th, Chamberlain was informed by a telegram from the High Commissioner that everything had quietened down. Rhodes was deeply chagrined that his plan had missed fire, but Jameson who had gathered a force of some five hundred men on the Transvaal border was too impatient to wait and on the very afternoon of the 29th, he raided across the border to precipitate matters in Johannesburg. He did so with a vengeance, but not in the way he expected. On New Year's Day, 1896, he received a peremptory order from the High Commissioner, Sir Hercules Robinson, to retire, but it was too late. The Boers were waiting for him and on the following day Jameson and his raiders were surrounded by overwhelming forces which barred the way, and there was nothing for it but surrender. The Raid had come to a petty and ineffective end, but its results were of profound importance, for it produced repercussions that stretched far beyond the limits of South Africa and it is for this reason that it takes its place in the history of the Empire.

Rhodes was dumbfounded at the ignominious fiasco, for he knew that it was fatal to his hopes of federation. His own complicity was patent to all, and the outbreak of Afrikaner feeling

was so strong that all the co-operation for common purposes that he had gradually built up at the Cape was at an end. The men of the two stocks were henceforward ranged in opposing ranks with the rights and wrongs of the Transvaal dispute as the issue between them. The power and prestige of the Boer oligarchy were increased in the eyes of their fellows at the Cape who were blinded to their corruption and petty tyranny. The Free State, too, was thrust into the arms of the Transvaal and pledged to a defensive alliance in preparation for a federal union from which all British influence should be excluded. In Great Britain the news of the Raid and of Rhodes's complicity in the uitlander conspiracy led at first to a revulsion of feeling in favour of Kruger and his Boers and gave a handle to the opponents of Chamberlain's imperial policy of which they hastened to take advantage. They maintained that the Colonial Secretary must have been privy to the attempt against the autonomy of a small people, and these were the first signs of the pro-Boerism which was to be so vocal for the next ten years and made Joseph Chamberlain the most hated man in British politics.

As soon as Kruger had the whole of the principal Reformers safely under lock and key in Pretoria but before the collapse of the Raid, he appealed to France and Germany for aid, which would bring the British paramountcy in South Africa on to the international stage with all the dangers that that involved. The time was one of danger, for Anglo-American relations over the Venezuelan boundary were more strained than they had been since the Civil War. France was still sore over the Fashoda scare, and Germany under her new Kaiser was anxious to seize any advantage she could snatch from troubled waters. Wilhelm II proposed to France and Russia to join him in a league against Britain and ordered his naval commander in Delagoa Bay to apply to the Portuguese authorities for permission to land marines for the protection of the German consulate in Pretoria. There seemed to be an excellent opportunity to establish a German protectorate over the South African Republic in flagrant defiance of Britain's rights. But the President was too wary to fall into the trap. He courteously replied that he was quite able to keep order in his territories, and when on the afternoon of the raiders' surrender the Kaiser sent him an effusive telegram congratulating him on

having safeguarded his independence without appealing for the aid of friendly powers Kruger only returned polite thanks.

The Kaiser's telegram was so direct a challenge to Britain's imperial authority that it swept aside the memory of Jameson's folly and Rhodes's intrigues under an outburst of national indignation. The Cabinet at once took action. A special service squadron was mobilised for Delagoa Bay to watch the German ships there, diplomatic moves were made to frustrate Germany's approaches to France, Russia and Portugal, and in the speeches of the Cabinet it was made unmistakably evident that Britain would defend her Empire against any challenge, whencesoever it came. Even the Afrikaners in Cape Colony who had been most antagonised let it be known that, while they sympathised with their kinsmen in the Transvaal, they would join in no action designed to transfer the hegemony of South Africa into German hands.

The next few months were filled with the trials of the Reformers and the raiders and passions ran high on either side in the acrimonious debates in the House of Commons and the Commission of Enquiry into the Raid which had been set up. Chamberlain was accused of unscrupulous imperialism and a readiness to serve financial interests without any care for Britain's good name for honest dealing. It was an unpleasant time of party spite which long left sore memories behind. The Colonial Secretary did his best to place our relations with Kruger on a better footing and to obtain better treatment for the uitlanders by some sort of compromise. But Kruger would have none of it; under the prompting of his entourage of Germans and Hollanders he began to pour a very large part of the revenues of the Republic into the purchase of artillery and munitions imported from Europe by the Netherlands South African Railway. Whereas the defence of the country had earlier been based upon the commando system, now a professional force trained by instructors from the Prussian army was embodied. The exclusive measures of the oligarchy were applied not only to English-speaking immigrants but also to men of Dutch stock from elsewhere in South Africa, and much resentment was caused by this rejection of the idea of Afrikaner nationhood. Accusations of corruption and malversation with obviously much truth behind them were levelled on all sides against the oligarchs, while the Boer farmers of the rank and file were suffering grievously from agri-

cultural depression and for lack of orderly and progressive government.

The Imperial Government was bound to take action in the face of the menacing military preparations that were now common knowledge, and Chamberlain determined to send out a much stronger man as High Commissioner to South Africa than the blameless but not over-determined seniors of the Colonial Service who had filled the post since Sir Bartle Frere's disgrace. The garrison in Natal was strengthened and the reinforcements were placed in a strategic position in Natal not far from the border under the command of Sir George White, a vigorous and distinguished soldier. For High Commissioner the Cabinet selected Sir Alfred Milner, a man in the prime of life who had won a fine reputation for ability and determination under Lord Cromer in Egypt and had come home to take a high position in the Civil Service. The danger was pressing, for Kruger's emissary, Dr. Leyds, the State Secretary, was being sent to Europe to raise a loan in Germany or France to be purchased by valuable and dangerous concessions, and though he had little or no success the mission was an indication that the trouble was no mere South African affair but one of first-rate imperial importance.

Milner, who arrived in South Africa early in 1897, was fully aware of this, and he was determined to uphold Britain's supremacy in South Africa and to brook no foreign interference. For two years he laboured hard to find some basis of compromise and by patient and friendly remonstrances to secure redress for the intolerable grievances in the Transvaal. We need not enter into the various efforts that he made with Chamberlain's consistent support, for they were all in vain, and though there was an occasional lull, as for example at the time of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in June 1897, things got worse and worse.

Meanwhile Rhodes had gone back to his northern schemes. He had resigned his position in the British South Africa Company immediately after the Raid, but when Chamberlain told him that the continuance of the Charter was very doubtful he rushed to London to save the child of his genius. The danger was averted, but it was clear that, if it were not to recur, serious efforts must be made to develop at any rate the southern part of the Company's lands on a more extended scale than had yet been attempted.

Rhodes threw himself into the task with all his energy, but he was faced with a new danger from the natives. The loss of so many of the Company's white employees in the Raid had left the Matabele under the control of arrogant black police, often recruited from other tribes, and the unrest that had been simmering among them ever since their partial subjugation three years before broke out into open revolt. The Mashonas also rose and it was only after seven months of hard and widespread fighting that the Matabele warriors were driven into the Matoppo Hills. There it was by Rhodes's own personal influence and prestige that he was able to arrange peace with them—the accomplishment of which he was prouder than all else. The Charter had been saved by his own exertions and it was entirely fitting that the land should be called after him "Rhodesia." As settlers, mostly of British stock, came in to open up rich mines and to organise the pastoral industry, so there was established as the outpost of the Empire that bounded South Africa on the north an intensely imperial community that shut off any chance of approach by land from a foreign possession towards the anti-imperialists of the Transvaal. Rhodes was impatient of all imperial control of what went on in the Company's territory and reported to the High Commissioner as little as he could. It was providential that Milner was not only strong but also tactful, and by personal discussion with the self-willed genius he was able to convince him that they had similar aims for the future of South Africa and the Empire. Thus from the latter part of 1897 onwards there was far more accord between the Company and the High Commissioner than had been the case under Milner's predecessors.

As things in South Africa slid down and down, despite all that Milner could do, to what he believed was an inevitable smash, Chamberlain was engaged in a prolonged tussle in Europe to prevent the Powers from making the Transvaal's quarrel their own. The old question of the Portuguese colonies was really at the bottom of it all, for Germany's colonial ambitions were again in full spate. She had seized Kiau-Chau from China and in the Spanish-American war she had only been held back from intervention at Manila by an ostentatious display of Anglo-American friendship. Chamberlain feared that she was trying to influence Portugal to sell or lease Delagoa Bay to her and, if she refused, to

summon a general conference to deal with the affairs of Africa wherein Portugal and Great Britain could be pilloried. To avert this Lord Salisbury in the later summer of 1898 opened negotiations with Germany and Portugal for loans on the security of the revenues of her African colonies. News of the loan negotiations were made public, but it was not revealed that Germany and Great Britain had come to another secret agreement, to divide Portugal's colonies between them if she should default. In that case Britain was to have Delagoa Bay and Germany the greater part of the rest. France was not informed of this secret agreement, though nominally her option of pre-emption still existed. It shows to what lengths Chamberlain and the Unionist Cabinet were prepared to go to bribe Germany off from intervention in the Transvaal, and how little prepared we were if things should come to the worst and there should be an Anglo-French war over Fashoda and Egypt or even if military action had to be taken against Kruger in South Africa. It was in a sense the low water mark of Chamberlain's Colonial Secretaryship.

Milner was absolutely convinced that we must insist on real reforms in the Transvaal and a cessation of the vindictive anti-British policy of Kruger's European-born advisers. Unless Britain put her foot down, even at the risk of war, her paramountcy in South Africa would be at an end and her whole position as a great imperial power irretrievably damaged. But Chamberlain was bound to warn the High Commissioner of our unpreparedness for hostilities at so great a distance from our base, and especially so if the war should extend beyond South Africa, as it seemed almost bound to do. It would not be merely a struggle as to whether the Transvaal *Vierkleur* or the British Union Jack should wave over a United South Africa, but might be merely the opening phase of a general conflict. That these fears were not exaggerated was amply proved by subsequent events, though the opening of the main tragedy was postponed for fifteen years after its prologue.

The first Naval Act was passed in Germany in April 1898 and Britain was stirred to look into her imperial defence as she had not done for many years. The Radical remnant bitterly accused Chamberlain and his colleagues of imperialistic jingoism, but the precautions were generally supported by public opinion and the Government hesitantly began to prepare for whatever might

happen. Milner came to London for a flying visit to make a personal report, and he was able to convince the Colonial Secretary and the Cabinet that matters in the Transvaal were approaching a climax. The War Office was quietly warned to prepare plans for reinforcing the garrison in South Africa and so matters hung breathless during the early months of 1899.

In the international sphere there was some slight improvement. France and Russia were becoming more and more closely associated and they turned a deaf ear to Germany's persuasions for an anti-British front and intervention in the Transvaal. They, at any rate, knew that that would mean war, for it would be an attack upon Britain's vital imperial interests. Russia therefore came to an agreement about matters of dispute with Great Britain in China and France about some issues in North Africa. Even Germany herself took a less hectoring tone about matters in dispute in Samoa and other Pacific islands, and it seemed as though a show of British firmness had already produced some effect. The real truth, of course, was that the European equilibrium was so nicely poised that neither side could afford to thrust the British Empire over to the other and especially so about matters of extra-European interest which were not to them of great importance. Britain's hands were thus set much freer than they had been, and Dr. Leyds on his return empty-handed from his mission in Europe warned his employers in Pretoria that they could not expect outside help.

The crucial decisions were made in London in May 1899 and recorded in despatches between Milner and Chamberlain, though they were not made public. Either the Transvaal must grant the uitlanders admission to full political rights on reasonable conditions or Great Britain would have to take strong measures to vindicate her paramountcy, and only Kruger could decide which course he would take. In the hope of persuading him to reason both the Cape Dutch and the President of the Free State endeavoured to bring the parties together. President Steyn invited Milner and Kruger to meet in conference in Bloemfontein, and in the first week of June they did so to discuss matters for the last time. But Kruger was utterly obstinate and the High Commissioner could not give way to his demands for arbitration without resigning everything that was at stake. So the Bloemfontein

Conference broke up in deadlock, and Chamberlain realised that he must disclose the grave causes to the House of Commons and the country. The May despatches were published and the sensation in South Africa and throughout the Empire was one of incredulity that matters had gone so far. It was a turning point in the history of the British Commonwealth like nothing else since 1776, though neither public nor Parliament yet realised it. For three months of crisis Milner was left in doubt as to whether the Government would at last grasp the nettle or no, while Chamberlain, knowing that the Liberal Opposition were doing all they could to rouse the country against him, was resolved to go to the last extreme of peaceful negotiation.

Some additional troops were sent to reinforce the British troops in Natal and pressure was brought to bear upon Portugal to prevent the passage of arms and munitions to the Transvaal through Delagoa Bay. A joint enquiry into the franchise was proposed and the more moderate and far-seeing of the Boer officials under the lead of Jan Smuts, the State Attorney, strove, acting on the advice of Hofmeyr and the Afrikaner leaders at the Cape, to get Kruger to agree. But he was adamant, for he saw Rhodes's hand at the back of the High Commissioner, as he thought, and he would not recoil before his inveterate enemy. Under Germany's pressure, too, Portugal gave way and permitted the arms consigned to him to go through, so that he felt assured of foreign help. The joint enquiry proposal came to nothing, and the British Government decided to mobilise an army corps for South Africa. The first troops from India landed in Natal on October 3rd and in the same week Kruger despatched an ultimatum demanding withdrawal of the British forces. The die was cast and on October 11th, when the ultimatum expired, the British Empire was launched upon the greatest military task she had undertaken since Napoleon's downfall in 1815, though no one yet realised its magnitude or difficulties.

CHAPTER XVIII

JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN AND THE EMPIRE, CONTINUED, 1899-1903

THE course of the operations in the South African war is recounted in most text-books of English history and need not detain us. The combatants on both sides entered the struggle with confidence that it would soon end in their favour, and neither looked forward to such a long, wearing down struggle as was seen in the three years 1899-1902. The Boer commandos rode out to fight those whom they still called British "redcoats" (though they wore khaki) intoxicated by memories of Majuba. They believed that if they could win a similar initial victory, the English Government would soon lose courage as Gladstone had done in 1881. The hopes voiced in the slogan "Afrika for the Afrikaners" were, they believed, not far off realisation. On the other side the British, Government and public alike, despised their opponents and believed that an imposing demonstration of Britain's altruist resolve to vindicate equality of rights for all South Africans would be enough to overthrow the rotten oligarchy at Pretoria. Each side was deceived by its own wishful thinking, but the Boer hopes were perhaps more excusable than the self-satisfaction and over-confidence which marked the British leaders and cloaked a good deal of easy-going amateurishness and lack of system.

The war period was divided into three well-marked phases. In the first (October 1899 to February 1900) the Boers invaded Natal and besieged Sir George White and his garrison in Ladysmith which Sir Redvers Buller vainly attempted to relieve. At the same time other commandos besieged Kimberley and Mafeking and a third force invaded Cape Colony in the hope of raising the Afrikaner farmers in revolt. They were largely unsuccessful in achieving that purpose, but they defeated General Gatacre who advanced against them and so kept the flames of incipient revolt smouldering in the colony. It was the reverses inflicted on Buller and Gatacre that awakened the British Government to the magnitude of the task that lay before them and led them to organise the new armies that were sent out to South Africa on an entirely different scale.

Lord Roberts, the most distinguished soldier in the Empire, was appointed Commander-in-chief with Lord Kitchener, the conqueror of the Sudan, as his Chief of Staff, and very strong reinforcements were despatched to serve under them. Within a few weeks of their arrival French had relieved Kimberley and captured the besieging force, Ladysmith was relieved (February); Lord Roberts entered Bloemfontein (March) and proclaimed the annexation of the Orange Free State which became the Orange River Colony (May), and he then marched on into the Transvaal to occupy Johannesburg and Pretoria (June). In the following month another great organised Boer army was compelled to surrender, and it looked as though the war was won and all that remained was to clean up the dispersed remnants of the defeated armies. This was Lord Roberts's belief when he passed over the command to Kitchener and left South Africa, but in reality only the second phase of the war was ended and its longest and most wearing period was yet to come.

The remnants of the Boer commandos scattered to begin a guerrilla war in which they took advantage of their superior mobility to make surprise attacks on isolated British detachments and the lines of communication with repeated success though always on a small scale. It was only by sweeping the country bare of supplies and cutting it up into isolated sections by lines of garrisoned blockhouses that the commandos were gradually worn down or captured, and the task took up the whole of 1901.

While the third phase of the military operations was dragging its tedious course along, the Boer leaders who still remained in the field were determined that there should be no peace without independence and they still clung desperately to the hope of foreign intervention. But it was all in vain, for Chamberlain was able to carry the rest of the Cabinet with him in a most resolute attitude towards the only Powers, Germany, France and Russia, that were likely to interfere. In the autumn of 1901 he publicly expressed this so unmistakably that even Germany, the Power most anxious to snatch benefit for herself from Britain's pre-occupations, thought better of it and turned instead to her ambitious designs in the East, where she was negotiating with Turkey for the construction of the Baghdad Railway. France and Russia had drawn together in the face of this German menace

to their major interests and the possible opponents of Britain therefore cancelled out. When the Boers fully realised early in 1902 that they could not hope for external help and the proffered mediation of Holland was courteously but very firmly declined by Great Britain (January 1902), the younger and more far-sighted leaders began to seek an honourable peace. Only 23,000 burghers and Cape rebels remained in the field and the British were persistently driving them in all directions. They had few supplies and they could get no more, for the British held all the railways and between their lines of defended blockhouses and wire entanglements they had swept the country bare.

In April the leaders of the two republics met at Krugersdorp and resolved to accept the British invitation to negotiate with Milner and Kitchener at Pretoria, but to persist in their demand for independence. They were told firmly, however, that that would never be granted, and they had to return to the remnants of their commandos to obtain full powers to conclude upon the best terms they could get. Though there was no armistice and the war went on as before without relaxation, they knew privately that the British would not be vindictive and that whatever terms were offered would not be dishonouring to men who had fought bravely and tenaciously.

After four weeks of debate among leaders and followers Louis Botha and Jan Smuts at the head of sixty delegates from both republics came to meet the British plenipotentiaries, Kitchener and Milner, at Vereeniging, with full powers. The resulting treaty is one of the fundamental documents of our imperial history, for it recorded the acceptance of allegiance to the British Crown in unmistakable terms and so for the first time placed all the white men in South Africa on an equal status. Henceforward it would be possible, as it had never been since the trekkers fled from their obligations as British subjects nearly seventy years before, to consider a federation of all South Africans on an equality without having to trouble about the vested interests of semi-independent Governments. Granted this essential point, Milner and Kitchener with Chamberlain's approval were generous about others. Most of the provisions of the treaty were devoted to the rehabilitation of the devastated country, but there were two points of outstanding importance which differentiated it from

any similar document imposed by a victor on the vanquished.

The Boers were assured of equality between English and Afrikaner languages in the use of the state and of the maintenance of their own traditions in education. But it was in the provision that promised self-government to the new colonies in the near future that the most generous measure lay. In both the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony there was a potential majority of voters of Afrikaner stock who could certainly outvote the English-speakers. To promise to entrust political power to all alike regardless of descent showed that in their professed belief in a united South Africa to take its place alongside the other Dominions the British Government could stand superior to the quarrels of the moment and look out to a future in which all patriotic South Africans could share as readily as they.

There was one point in the treaty which left a very contentious problem unsolved and this was the status of the natives. It will be remembered that whereas in Cape Colony and to a minor extent in Natal they might attain to political equality with the whites, in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony this was impossible, and an unbridged gulf existed between black and white. It was agreed that no steps should be taken to assimilate these opposed arrangements until after the new colonies had acquired representative government. This meant the predominance of the rigid Boer view in the relations between white and black, and it contained within it the germs of much future trouble.

While the war was still in its last phase, Milner had been devoting a great deal of his energies to establishing a Crown colony government in the conquered districts which should be marked by efficiency and integrity and would be really constructive on the material side. He aimed at greatly strengthening the British element among the white population, for he had little belief in the Boers' acceptance of defeat. He thought that the only safe way to guard against a renewal of the struggle was to make the British element predominant as Durham had thought after the Canadian rebellion. But again circumstances proved too strong, the Anglicisation of the Boers proceeded no better than that of the French-Canadians, and every step taken to promote it encouraged instead an exclusive Afrikaner nationalism. On one side therefore Milner's reconstruction was to some extent a failure, but in every

other way it was a tremendous achievement. Within but a few months the scattered population were got back to their homes, the wheels of industry were set revolving again and the scars were healed. Even the scars of sentiment were not too deep for repair and Chamberlain's conciliating speeches did a good deal to restore shattered confidence.

Throughout the whole course of hostilities the Colonial Secretary and the Unionist Government were virulently attacked by their Radical opponents, in the House of Commons and on political platforms. These "pro-Boers," as they were called, assailed every measure that was taken as the gratification of ignoble interests, and their railings seemed to convict them of a rancorous anti-Imperialism. In face of their attacks Chamberlain went his own way without replying to them with too much venom. When peace had been secured, he thought it his duty to visit South Africa and come into personal contact with the rebuilders of the shattered polity, Boer and English-speaker alike. He went out *via* Egypt and Zanzibar at the end of 1902 and thus saw something of the places he had done so much to build up into prosperity. Throughout the early months of 1903 he travelled in many parts of South Africa and his public speeches were marked by a conciliatory but realistic spirit which well expressed the thoughts and hopes of the best elements of the nations of the British Commonwealth. There was no doubt that there was as keen an interest in South Africa in every one of the British dominions as in the United Kingdom and as fervent a hope for a rapprochement between the men of the two stocks. Each of the dominions had sent considerable contingents to fight alongside the British troops during the struggle and they felt that they were directly concerned in the peace and in welcoming back a united South Africa into the circle of the self-governing nations of the Commonwealth. South Africans, especially those of Afrikaner stock, hardly yet realised it, but the influence of the new outer nations of the Commonwealth was undoubtedly a powerful factor on the side of moderation and generosity to the vanquished and it was an unmistakable indication of the unity of the Empire in fundamentals despite all its variety of organisation and the determination of each of the dominions to preserve its autonomy and consolidate its nationhood. Chamberlain's visit to South Africa was the climax of his Colonial

Secretaryship and his interest turned in a different direction, towards the new fiscal policy he believed to be necessary for the Empire's benefit.

To trace its evolution we must go back for a moment as far as the first Colonial Conference of 1887 which we have already mentioned in certain of its aspects. In that Conference and in those which succeeded it three questions were prominent in the minds of most of the delegates, though they took very diverse views about them. Many people in the United Kingdom led by the Imperial Federation League took great interest in the question of imperial federation or some closer form of imperial organisation, but the dominion delegates were strongly opposed to such ideas and in face of this opposition they never made headway. Imperial defence commanded much greater unity of opinion, though there again there was a diversity of views as to the best way to achieve the ends that all men agreed were essential. At the 1887 Conference the Australian delegates complained of the Imperial Government's neglect of imperial interests in the Pacific which were so vitally important to Australia. In consequence of this an agreement was concluded with the Australian colonies by which they agreed to make a considerable annual contribution towards the cost of a squadron of cruisers in the waters of the South Pacific which would give reality to the rather shadowy control that had been exercised only spasmodically as naval ships chanced to be on the station. From this beginning questions of imperial defence always took a leading place at successive conferences and widely extended common or parallel action was worked out.

For our present enquiry, however, the most significant question raised at the Conference of 1887 was involved in J. H. Hofmeyr's advocacy of Imperial Preference in trade matters. That a South African should desire to further the idea and that he should be supported by many of the Australians was indicative that the free-trade Cobdenite doctrine was no longer sacrosanct. But the subject was so thorny in British party politics that it was ingeniously shelved by the Conservative Colonial Secretary (Mr. Holland Sidney afterwards Lord Knutsford) who was in the chair at the Conference, and no motion upon Imperial Preference was recorded in its proceedings.

Although the Jubilee Conference had afforded opportunities for interesting discussions and personal contacts between the statesmen of the Empire, it was not at the time foreseen that it was the forerunner of a profoundly important development. The question of Imperial Federation had been explicitly barred out from the Conference as too delicate for discussion, and the timorous Colonial Office was not anxious to summon a new meeting because it might be impossible to repeat the embargo in face of the constant agitation of the advocates of the Federation idea. A conference was summoned to Ottawa on the invitation of the Canadian Government in 1894, but it was not properly in the line of succession from the Jubilee Conference, for it was not attended by statesmen of foremost rank and it did not deal with political questions. Attention was confined to purely practical matters like the improvement of imperial communications across the Pacific and its recommendations were entirely connected with the business side of imperial relations.

It was the far-seeing initiative of Joseph Chamberlain that raised matters again on to the highest plane of statecraft. Ten years after the first Colonial Conference the revered old Queen had reigned for sixty years and Chamberlain was determined to celebrate her Diamond Jubilee not only by a great ceremonial gathering of representatives from every part of her far-flung Empire but also by a great stock-taking of imperial ideas. The invitation to a new Conference was welcomed in each of the self-governing colonies and they sent their leading statesmen to represent them at the Diamond Jubilee celebrations and voice their views in the deliberations. Chamberlain was determined to make the meetings an epoch-making departure in imperial relations, and he knew that in some ways the fiscal problem would be at the centre of what was discussed. Already in Ottawa in 1894 resolutions had been placed on record in spite of all impediments whether by treaties with foreign powers or otherwise that hampered reciprocal trade relations between various parts of the Empire, and, though it was recognised that the exceptional position of the United Kingdom would make it difficult for her to take steps towards imperial preference, the colonies pledged themselves to enter into negotiations for reciprocal preferences between themselves.

In his opening speech to the Conference of 1897 Chamberlain advocated some step forward towards the formation of a real Imperial Council consisting of plenipotentiaries who had power to commit their Governments to action in appropriate circumstances, but this was much further than the self-governing colonies were prepared to go and with only New Zealand and Tasmania dissenting they expressed themselves formally as satisfied with the existing relations between the United Kingdom and the self-governing colonies. This was a tacit rebuff to Chamberlain's zeal for constructive advance, but it was undoubtedly representative of colonial opinion which was unalterably opposed to any step forward that would infringe the complete autonomy that had been attained by the previous two generations. Though they were not expressed in words, later years have shown that the instincts of the delegates were right when they preferred to leave imperial relations to shape themselves in the course of time and not to try to hasten the pace by the discussion of paper schemes of constitution-making.

Such schemes were parried by colonial opposition, but Chamberlain's other plans for an imperial fiscal union were blocked by his own colleagues in the British Cabinet and the Liberal Unionist party who were unalterably opposed to any breach in the United Kingdom's policy of free imports. Without such a breach imperial preference both ways was impossible, and here already in 1897 before the South African war we can see clearly the beginnings of the split that was to have such an important influence on the Colonial Secretary's career after the war was over. The Conference reaffirmed the Ottawa resolutions for the denunciation of hampering commercial treaties and the Imperial Government took action soon after the Conference dispersed. The treaties with Belgium and Germany that dated from the 'sixties were denounced and so the way lay open to implement the measure for imperial preference that Canada had already passed. The preference came into effect in 1898 at the rate of twenty-five per cent., increased two years later to thirty-three and one third. Apparently this was the only result of a Conference that Chamberlain had organised with such high hopes, but in reality much more had been attained. The delegates unanimously approved the idea that similar imperial conferences should be assembled from time

to time, and this marked a real step forward in the growth of what has become an essential feature in the equipment of the Empire-Commonwealth.

Before the next Conference met in 1902, a striking manifestation of the spiritual unity of the Empire had been shown in the South African war. Foreign countries and even some of the inveterate anti-imperialists at home might accuse Great Britain of tyranny and self-seeking in her action against the Boer republics, but, as we have already stated, this was not the case in the self-governing colonies. They had contributed of their men and their stores to aid the imperial forces in their task, and it was fitting that the Colonial Secretary should emphasise the recognition and gratitude of the United Kingdom for what they had done. This was the key-note of the speech with which as President he opened the proceedings. He again returned to his idea of an Imperial Council, for he did not realise that similar ends of co-operation could be attained without constitutional machinery. But it was to the question of imperial preference that he mainly directed his attention, and it seemed as though a way had recently been opened by which the United Kingdom might reciprocate in some small way the preference granted by certain colonies.

As a partial measure for financing the war a registration fee of one shilling a quarter on imported wheat had been established despite the opposition of the free traders who regarded even this small duty as a breach in the sacrosanct system of free imports. Chamberlain believed that he might make a first step towards preferential duties in the United Kingdom by relieving colonial wheat of the registration fee, but before he could take any steps to achieve his purpose the Conference met. To it he expressed as his ideal the establishment of free trade within every part of the Empire and a common tariff against the world outside. But he was too much of a realist to put this forward as a practicable or quickly realisable scheme, and it was well that he did not do so, for there were many indications that the colonial delegates were more acutely alive to the dangers it involved to their own systems of protection for their infant industries than they were convinced of its practicability, even as an ideal for the remote future. There were more difficulties in the way than the Colonial Secretary realised, both in the United Kingdom and in the self-governing

colonies. But upon imperial preference there was general agreement among the colonial delegates, and they took an important step forward in formally resolving to press upon the Imperial Government the desirability of granting preferential treatment for the products and manufactures of the colonies either by exemption from or reduction of duties imposed upon goods entering the United Kingdom.

This unanimity had been more easily achieved because the only colony that had been a strong supporter of a Free Trade system had abandoned it when New South Wales entered into federation with the other Australian colonies in 1900. They were all strongly protectionist and the Commonwealth of Australia in which they were merged took its fiscal policy from them. It had been largely the differences upon the question of free trade versus protection that had so long delayed Australian federation, but the measure was at last resolved upon, and the Commonwealth of Australia Act was passed as one of the last pieces of legislation of Queen Victoria's reign. Federation was naturally therefore very much in Chamberlain's mind when he left for his visit to South Africa shortly after the conclusion of the Colonial Conference, but he fully realised and stated in his speeches that the time was not yet ripe to press forward with a federal scheme for South Africa until after the self-government that had been promised at Vereeniging. It was not until after he had left office that the question became one of practical politics, as will appear later.

When Chamberlain got back to England in March 1903 he found a most unwelcome situation awaiting him. The high imperial enthusiasm which had greeted the victory in the war had waned into disillusionment with its aftermath and the Radical anti-imperialists seized greedily upon the opportunity of revenging themselves upon the renegade whom they hated. Their pro-Boerism was too unpopular to attract votes, but in the registration duty on corn they saw an excellent object of attack. The old cry of "Dear food" was raised and Chamberlain's imperialism was assailed as a policy for taxing the food of the British working-man for the benefit of capitalists and employers. The post-war depression and the rising tide of unemployment made the cry effective, and while Chamberlain was away his Free Trade colleagues in the Cabinet and the Liberal Unionist party decided to repeal the

corn duty. He returned to find the repeal effected and his hopes of building the first step towards imperial preference upon the duty entirely dashed.

With all his courage he at once took up the challenge and in his first important speech after his return he declared himself in favour of a complete reversal of fiscal policy in order to build a new system of tariff reform (May 1903). Imperial preference for colonial products was to be its essential measure and retaliatory duties were to protect our exports of manufactured goods against those foreign countries who had imposed ever-increasing tariffs against British goods. Only thus, he proclaimed, could the Empire be defended against the ruinous competition of foreigners and its commercial security protected. All through the summer of 1903 he strove to force his policy of Tariff Reform upon his colleagues in the Cabinet in order to keep the pledges he had given to the colonial statesmen in the Conference of 1902. But he found it impossible to withstand the opposition of the Free Trade ministers and he could not secure the support of the Prime Minister, Mr. Balfour, who strove to preserve a non-committal attitude and to avoid the disruption of the Unionist party, would not express himself clearly either for or against Tariff Reform. In September Chamberlain resigned and a few days later, although they were unaware that the Prime Minister had accepted the resignation, the most prominent of the Free Traders in the Cabinet also resigned. The disruption of the Unionist party was inevitable and unfortunately the quarrel between the Free Traders and the Tariff Reformers seemed to be bound up with differences not only upon the fiscal question but also upon the necessity for a progressive imperial policy. The Radical anti-imperialists under the lead of Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman were overjoyed, for the breach seemed to promise them complete victory at the General Election that could not long be delayed. Thus the greatest Colonial Secretaryship in our history came to an end with apparent defeat for the statesman who above all others had fought for the idea of imperial unity and progress. For a little more than a year longer the Balfour Government struggled on, but it clearly was out of touch with the country and when it resigned in December 1905 this was amply proved by the sweeping success of the Liberals at the General Election of 1906. It was upon their shoulders that the

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burden of organising the Colonial Conference of 1907 fell, although the invitations to it had been issued in 1905 by Alfred Lyttelton who had succeeded Chamberlain at the Colonial Office.

CHAPTER XIX

THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICS IN THE INDIAN EMPIRE, 1881-1914

THE history of India during the thirty years after 1881 was less closely associated with the general history of the Empire than it had been during the immediately preceding period. The outstanding events of those years were concerned with happenings beyond the frontier, but after 1881 things quietened down and with the exception of the scare over Russia's action at Penjdeh on the Afghan border in 1885 there was nothing particularly eventful to note. Afghanistan under the Amir Abdurrahman was closed to external interference, and he devoted himself to building up a strong and stable but self-contained state. Between the country under close Afghan administration and that under the Government of India there was a lawless borderland occupied by warring tribes whose main interest lay in plundering one another and their neighbours. They were fanatic Muslims and whenever a new prophet or fakir arose among them his preaching was pretty certain to be followed by renewed tribal unrest. In 1893 an agreement was negotiated with Abdurrahman by which spheres of interest among the tribes were marked out for Afghanistan and India respectively. The Government of India began to occupy strategic positions of importance beyond the frontier and this forward policy roused the fears of the tribes that their independence was threatened. A wave of fanaticism swept through them and extensive military operations had to be undertaken to prevent them from making incursions over the frontier into our administered territory. The trouble came to a head in 1897 and when Lord Curzon became Viceroy in 1899, he saw that a new departure in policy was called for.

In 1901 the frontier districts were separated from the Punjab and a new North-West Frontier Province was created under a Chief Commissioner to deal with the whole situation up to the limits of the sphere of interest among the independent tribes that had been fixed by the agreement of 1893. The preservation of

peace beyond the border was entrusted to contingents of militia raised among the local tribes, the means of communication were improved by the construction of strategic roads and the policing of them was entrusted to the local militia who received subventions from the Government of India and whose interest it was therefore to maintain peace. By 1904 the Curzon reforms were in full working order and a far greater measure of peace was brought to the troubled frontier than it had ever known before. Within the settled districts of the North-West Frontier Province regular regiments were garrisoned at strategic positions, whence they might be moved up quickly to support the local levies if serious disorder threatened.

In 1902 it was feared that Russia was again contemplating a forward movement, this time into Tibet, the closed and self-contained country beyond the northern border of India from which all Europeans were rigidly excluded. To guard against a Russian advance it was determined to send a British expedition to come to an agreement with the Tibetans and in 1904 it reached Lhasa, the capital. Tibet was assured that India did not threaten her independence and in 1907 an agreement was concluded which has since maintained peaceful and cordial relations between India and Tibet. Russian influence was directed towards agreement after the improvement in Anglo-Russian relations which came with the *Entente Cordiale* of 1904, of which we shall speak in a later chapter. Thus the frontier of India from end to end was stabilised until the outbreak of the Great War in 1914.

The outstanding movement in India of the period 1881 to 1914 was the gradual rise of political consciousness which came first among the literate classes who had received their education through the medium of English in the university colleges which had been set up in all parts of India during the middle years of the nineteenth century. The great masses of the Indian peoples were as yet not politically conscious even in the affairs of their own provinces. Their government was carried on by Englishmen according to the highest standards of justice and efficiency, but what was done was what they thought best and not what those they governed would desire. Their exclusion from all positions of influence was felt very deeply by educated Indians, for they had come to believe that they, too, should share in the

benefits of self-government which they had learned in their studies of English history to regard as Britain's supreme gift to her own people and the peoples of her dominions. In 1886 a strong Public Services Commission reported in favour of the appointment of Indians to high positions in the Civil Services of the provinces, but the most important service of all, the Indian Civil Service, was still recruited only by competitive examinations held in England, and only those Indians who came to complete their education in the universities of the United Kingdom could hope to compete. However, some were successful and gradually by the closing years of the century there was a small number of Indians in the senior administrative service, and as a rule they were doing well.

Many of the best Indian minds were attracted to the legal profession and there they found their greatest opportunity for advancement. Those who acquired the largest practices in the Courts made large incomes and were well known to the public. They led their professional colleagues who formed by far the most active section of literate Indians and having little share in the plums of the profession turned to politics with a sense of frustrated ambition. Many of them also began to take up journalism and established newspapers written in English but circulating mainly among educated Indians unlike the old-established journals which circulated among the British community and were written by British journalists. Those newspapers were the only forum in which the measures undertaken by the Government could be discussed, for there were no opportunities for public meeting or debate. The discussions were always critical of the Government and when the Indian-edited journals appeared they, too, were mainly critical of what was done, so that the press provided the first political platform which was open to educated Indian opinion and its tendency was always in the direction of anti-Governmental criticism and rarely in the early years did it set forth many constructive ideas.

The first serious proposals to find an outlet for the new aspirations of educated Indians were considered during the viceroyalty of Lord Ripon, 1880-4. He considered the introduction of an elected element into the legislative councils of the provinces which were then composed mainly of official members but with a nominated minority. Ripon, however, did not carry the proposal

into effect, but began first with the erection of municipal councils in the larger cities outside the "presidency towns," Madras, Bombay and Calcutta, which had long had municipal boards or corporations on the English model. The new governing bodies of the towns were largely composed of members elected on a narrow franchise, only those possessing more than a certain amount of real or personal property having the vote. The powers of the boards were entirely confined to local affairs, but they had an educative value, for they introduced the idea of election into Indian life and they gave experience of government and responsibility to some of the politically-minded members of the educated classes. The extension of the principle of election to the provincial councils was proposed by Lord Dufferin, Ripon's successor, in 1888, but it was not accepted by the Secretary of State and instead what was done was to pay more careful attention to the selection of the nominated members and attempt to make them representative of various sectional interests among the leading citizens. This method of recruitment was in many ways adapted to Indian circumstances in which communal differences are very marked and there is no homogeneous community as in the Western democracies.

The deepest cleavage is between the orthodox adherents of Hinduism, divided amongst themselves by their caste prejudices, and the Muslims who include among their numbers some of the most martial races in India and are especially strong in the north and in Bengal. The Muslims stood largely aloof from the secular system of education established in the new Government colleges, for they profoundly believed that their religion was the fundamental element in all education worthy of them. For long therefore those who acquired access to the external equipment of Western knowledge were predominantly Hindus and they were much more vocal in expressing themselves about their new political interests than were the Muslims. The better-class and more conservative Hindus stood aside from the new political movements of the 'eighties and the leading Muslims also abstained, so that it was the less responsible and more radical among the Hindu literates who were prominent from the first in pressing them on. In 1885 they organised the first meeting of the National Congress which, regardless of all the realities of communal and provincial

divisions, pressed the idea that India was a single nation. The procedure of the Congress was modelled upon English precedents and in its early years it put forward its main demands, within the framework of the existing constitution, for an elective element to be in a majority in the legislative councils and for the admission of Indians to the higher ranks of the administrative service. At first some attention was also directed by the Congress towards constructive social and economic reforms, but gradually all its efforts were turned in a political direction, and before 1900 a serious split appeared between the extremists, who were becoming more revolutionary in their tendencies and began to work for the exclusion of British rule from India, and the moderates who worked for constitutional reform. There was a steadily growing cleavage between the leading groups in the Congress, though it was hidden as far as possible from the public by the adoption of compromise resolutions which were worded in their colourless formulas with greater and greater difficulty at the successive annual meetings. In 1906 the split could no longer be concealed, for the Congress at Surat broke up in complete disorder. A new slogan had been proclaimed, the demand for *swaraj*, which the moderates interpreted as meaning Home Rule for India as a part of the Empire, while the extremists preached it as a cry for complete independence. For the time being the moderates held the upper hand in Congress and the extremists turned to the methods of conspiracy and terrorism. Against their outrages it was necessary and possible for the Government to take drastic police action, which was gradually effective, but in the long run it was the widespread agitation started by the left wing among the illiterate masses that was the more dangerous.

The more responsible sections in every part of India stood aloof from the Congress, even though its control was after 1906 for some time in the hands of its more moderate elements. The agitators did everything they could to arouse anti-British feelings. Among the literates they excited hatred against the reservation of posts of influence for men of British descent and played upon the sense of frustration in the unsuccessful candidates for Governmental employment. Among the illiterate masses they agitated against the measures undertaken by the Government to improve the health services and to combat the epidemics of bubonic plague

which swept over many parts of India during the 'nineties. They strove in every way to excite the religious and caste prejudices of the Hindus, and this was their most potent weapon against the officials whom they falsely accused of attacking the deepest religious feelings of the Indian masses. Ever since Britain had ruled in India it had been a fundamental maxim of policy to respect from interference the customs and traditions, whether religious or social, of all sects and creeds alike, but that mattered nothing to the extremists. They twisted even the simplest and most needful measures into deep-laid plots against religion and social morality, and it was this above all that threatened danger to the confidence in British justice and impartiality of administration. The opposition to the Government's measures against plague in some places led to open rioting that had to be suppressed by the police and in some cases the assistance of British troops had to be called in, but mostly it led to obstinate passive resistance and so it was the forerunner of the non-co-operative campaigns which marked the anti-Government agitation of the Congress leaders in later years.

Although it was the persistent contention of Congress that India was a nation and that the Government should concede their demands as those of a majority of Indians, the real facts were too strong to be disregarded by any but those who were drunk with their own ideas. Religious, communal and provincial cleavages were far too deep for Congress "nationalism" to prevail against them and down to 1914 the idea made little headway. Regional questions were those which really commanded interest and aroused serious anti-Government movements. The most serious of these was that which was aroused in Bengal in 1905 by the administrative reforms introduced by Lord Curzon. From the early days of British administration Bengal, which has a marked individuality of its own, was linked under a single provincial government with the very different regions of Bihar and Orissa. In order to improve upon this unwieldy arrangement Lord Curzon decided upon the partition of Bengal into two more manageable units, Western Bengal which included Bihar, and Eastern Bengal with which Assam was linked. The partition aroused a great movement of Bengali patriotism and much agitation in which Hindus and Muslims both took part. It was in this

agitation that the Bengali revolutionary terrorists found a fruitful seed-bed for their conspiracies, but beyond this there was deep dislike among the responsible moderate elements in the province against the partition of what was proclaimed to be the single, indivisible "motherland." This was the outstanding example of regional patriotism, but it was matched in other parts of India and notably in the Maratha region round Poona, where also the extremists found fertile soil for their revolutionary intrigues during the decade 1900-10.

In the same period the old communal strife between Muslims and Hindus became much more active and dangerous. It had existed for centuries, but now it was embittered by the attacks of each community upon the cherished beliefs and practices of the other. The disputes were local in character and there was no centralised organisation of them, but they led to dangerous disturbances which called for constant watchfulness from the authorities and laid heavy burdens on the police, and even in some cases the military, for their suppression.

As time went on, it became clear to the British Government that some large measure of governmental reform was needed in India and that this could not be undertaken on theoretical lines but called for a recognition of the very specialised character of Indian problems. Lord Curzon, who had undertaken so many reforms in various branches of Indian administration, would not listen to the rising demand for the introduction of the elective principle into the legislative councils of the provinces and nothing was done during his viceroyalty which came to an end in 1905. With the accession to power of the Liberals in Great Britain in 1906 the Congress leaders were encouraged by their British friends to believe that their opportunity had come. They vociferously put forward demands for the grant of "responsible government" in India on the lines of the Dominion constitutions. But they got cold comfort from John Morley, who now held the Secretaryship of State for India, and he formally declined to include responsible government among the reforms of the legislative Councils then under consideration with the Viceroy, Lord Minto.

The Morley-Minto reforms came into effect in 1909 and they were a great step forward in India's political development in that they introduced a very considerable element of popularly elected

members into the enlarged provincial Councils. Henceforward they contained three kinds of members—officials, nominated members representing special interests, and those elected by the constituencies. These were not geographical units voting directly for their representatives, but were of various kinds. In some cases they were geographical but the members were indirectly elected by delegates chosen by the elected municipalities and rural boards established under the Ripon scheme. In other cases organised interests like merchants or landowners elected representatives, and in others the Muslim communities in particular areas chose members to represent them. This last fact was a token of special importance, for it indicated that the Muslims were now ready to enter into the political arena as a community, though they steadfastly and successfully refused to be merged into a great mass of electors in which they were certain to be outvoted by the Hindu majority.

The Morley-Minto reforms gave for the first time a constitutional outlet for the expression of public opinion. In the central Legislative Council of the Government of India there was still an official majority, though even there there was now an opportunity to express criticism of Governmental policy and to voice grievances constitutionally in open debate. In the legislative Councils of the provinces the unofficial members were in a majority and could outvote the officials if they combined together. Thus henceforward the Government would have critics of a responsible kind and their criticism was bound to be of greater value and influence than the irresponsible sniping in the press that had hitherto been the only safety valve. The development of an Indian polity or politics had made a momentous step forward before the great break-up of 1914-18 came to change everything in India as elsewhere.

CHAPTER XX

THE ORGANISATION OF THE DEPENDENT EMPIRE, 1870-1914

IN previous chapters we have spoken of the material development of the British dependencies and of the various measures undertaken to increase their productiveness and improve the health and other conditions of those who dwelt within them. But we have said little about the organisation of their government and we must now take up that aspect of their history in order to note whether there were any features common to a large number of them which will indicate the development of imperial policy for the dependencies other than the promotion of material progress.

There were no far-reaching reforms in the government of the old Crown colonies after the revision of the representative system in the 'sixties in Jamaica and other of the West Indian colonies to which we have already referred. Only Barbados and the Bermudas and Bahamas retained their old representative constitutions intact. The Assembly there was elected on a franchise dependent upon the possession of property; the Council was nominated by the Crown on the advice of the Governor and exercised two distinct functions. It was the Upper House of the Legislature and when performing its legislative function the Governor did not take part in its debates. But it also served as a Privy Council to advise the Governor in his executive acts. While performing this function he presided, but he was not bound by the decision of the majority and was in no sense responsible to the Council or to the Legislature as a whole. His responsibility was to the Crown which meant that he formulated his policy in concert with the Colonial Office, though he was allowed considerable freedom in carrying into effect the principles decided on. With the exception of the predominance of an elective element in the Assembly the system was generally the same in all the Crown colonies and it has remained unchanged.

But in the new dependencies acquired within the last quarter of the nineteenth century institutions were not set in such a rigid mould and two movements of importance had a great deal to do in

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shaping them. In fact we may say that in the governance of the dependencies these were the outstanding characteristics of the period. The first was utilisation of chartered companies as agents of government, standing between the Crown and its subjects; the second the development of indirect rule in the Protectorates. We have already mentioned some of the chartered companies incidentally in connection with the story of events in certain regions, but now we may say something as to how the movement for their erection developed.

The classic examples of trading companies which exercised functions of government are, of course, the East India Company and the Hudson's Bay Company, both dating from the seventeenth century, but we need say nothing about them. The East India Company was a hollow sham when our period began and was entirely abolished in 1858; the Hudson's Bay Company resigned its governmental functions at the beginning of the 'seventies and concerned itself thenceforward only with commerce. Their influence on the subsequent movement was solely historical, and even that influence must not be over-estimated. The new chartered companies were really a fresh device to cope with new conditions, and when they were beginning to work similarities and precedents were sought in earlier centuries, though they had little touch with reality. The first chartered company of the period was the British North Borneo Company and in its inception we can see the same factors present as may be noted in each of its successors.

The north-western coast of Borneo had been, as we noted in an earlier chapter, the scene of minor British trading activity in the middle of the nineteenth century when Sir James Brooke entered Sarawak and Labuan was annexed by the Crown as a coaling station. It was a no-man's-land as far as European sovereignty was concerned, for it lay between the Dutch sphere in south-east Borneo and the Spanish possessions in the Philippines. The native ruler in the region was the Malay Sultan of Brunei who ruled over both the Sulu Islands and the coast of Borneo. In the 'seventies a firm of British merchants, Messrs. Dent and Co., obtained from the Sultan a concession to develop the trade of his dominions. In 1878 the Spaniards conquered the Sulu Islands and claimed the Sultan's territory in Borneo, but the Dents

had already established trading stations there and refused to retire. They appealed to the Crown to proclaim Brunei as a British protectorate, but the Government would not accept a responsibility that would certainly be costly and might involve awkward disputes with Spain and Holland. Lord Salisbury, then Foreign Secretary, would recognise neither's exclusive claims, but he would go no further, and Sir Alfred Dent founded a North Borneo Association to carry on with its own capital and employees. If trade were to be carried on profitably peace and order must be preserved, and so the Association began to undertake the functions of sovereignty on a modest scale. The region is obscure and remote and what was going on made little or no stir in England. But Dent and his friends realised that at any moment they might be involved in legal difficulties without their Association having any corporate existence. They applied therefore to the Crown for the grant of a charter of incorporation, and in 1881 their request was granted. The British North Borneo Company was established to carry on trade and planting within stated limits, but no monopoly was granted. The Company was permitted to exercise jurisdiction and to preserve peace within the territory, but there was no annexation by the Crown although it was stipulated that the Company must remain British and that it could enter into no relations with a foreign Power save through the Foreign Office in London. The arrangements were unprecedented and anomalous, but in 1888 the legal position was placed on a regular footing when the Company's territories were accepted as a British Protectorate. The Company still carried on the administration without interference though with some general supervision, as, in fact, it continues to do.

It was mentioned in an earlier chapter how a similar arrangement had been planned for the Mackinnon Concession in East Africa but was not carried into effect in the 'seventies. The idea of carrying out an expansion of British commerce and acquiring territorial rights to protect it by concession from a native ruler (the Sultan of Zanzibar in the one case, the Sultan of Brunei in the other) was thus much in the air in the late 'seventies and early 'eighties. The Government would not accept fresh territorial liabilities and British merchants to guard themselves against foreign interference therefore were determined to achieve their ends with their own capital and their own employees.

A very similar sequence of events was proceeding in West Africa, as we have already mentioned, but this was on a larger scale and has led to far more important permanent results. After the Berlin Conference of 1884-5 had established the doctrine of spheres of influence in international law, George Taubman Goldie's National African Company was easily able to show that British trade was predominant on the Lower Niger and therefore that it was a British sphere of influence. But the Crown was not prepared to shoulder the heavy burden of administering the interior parts of the region. On the coast there was already a Crown colony at Lagos and the Colonial Office was willing to accept responsibility for the government of the neighbouring coast tribes from Lagos westward to the dividing line between the French and British spheres where international difficulties were most likely to arise. Hence the Niger Coast Protectorate was established under the direct control of the Crown. At the eastern side of the region lay the new German colony of the Cameroons. From that quarter in 1886 German agents were penetrating into the region along the course of the Lower Niger and attempting to establish trading connections there as bases for the later extension of political influence, although the German Government had acknowledged that it lay within the British sphere.

The Crown was still unwilling to undertake its administration to counter these insidious moves, but something had to be done and the device adopted was to accede to the petition of the National African Company and grant a charter to a Company to exercise sovereignty under the Crown. The Royal Niger Company received its charter in 1886 on the same lines as had been granted to the North Borneo Company. No trading monopoly was granted, but Goldie and his associates had established their commerce so securely that they had nothing to fear from competition and the Company was able to proceed with the establishment of secure and orderly government. By the 'nineties their officers had penetrated to the middle Niger and began to come into contact with French pioneers who had come down the river. In 1898 an agreement was reached between the British Government and France by which a general line was laid down between their spheres of interest. The French were allotted the whole region lying along the Upper Niger, while the Royal Niger Company as the repre-

sentative of Great Britain held the middle and lower river with the country round as far as Lake Chad. The task of administering so great an extent of territory was too great for the resources of a commercial Company even though it was as successful as the Royal Niger Company had proved. In 1899-1900 the Crown therefore bought out all its political rights and the Company confined itself for the future to its commercial work. Thus Nigeria took up its position in the Empire as a territory directly administered by the Crown and we may leave its subsequent history for a moment.

To the other two most important Chartered Companies, the British East Africa Company and the British South Africa Company, we have already directed some attention and we need here add little. By the agreement of 1886 the mainland territories of the Sultan of Zanzibar were divided into German and British spheres of interest and in each case concessions were obtained from the Sultan for their development. The German East Africa Company (founded in 1888) was very much according to British precedent, while Sir William Mackinnon took the lead in founding a British East Africa Association to open up the country behind Mombasa on the same humanitarian lines that he had long been planning. But the Germans did not abide by the conditions to which their Government had agreed, and Mackinnon was forced to represent to the Cabinet that his Association could not carry on their work without wide administrative powers. The Crown was not willing in the difficult international circumstances to take direct control of what was still legally part of the Sultanate of Zanzibar, and in 1888 the Government decided to accept the petition of the Association for a charter for the Imperial British East Africa Company on the same lines as that of the North Borneo Company.

From the first the Company was faced with many difficulties owing to German interference, and though it expended a large proportion of its capital upon establishing governmental machinery for the administration of the regions adjacent to the coast, when the difficulties in Uganda came to a head in 1890, the task of coping with them became greater than it could accomplish. Captain F. D. Lugard was sent out by the Company to establish its authority, and though he was successful, the financial strain was so great that his forces soon had to be withdrawn. When the

British Government in 1892 abolished the customs duties at the coast ports which had provided a large part of the revenue on which the Company depended for its administrative expenses, it was clear that the charter must be abandoned. Sir William Mackinnon died in 1893, and in the following year the Government consented to pay a certain amount in compensation for the administrative machinery that had been set up, but it was quite insufficient to satisfy the liabilities of the Company, and, when the accounts were settled after the abrogation of the charter, it was found that the shareholders had not only lost all their capital, but there was a considerable deficiency. The Imperial British East Africa Company was financially the least successful of all the chartered companies, but it did a very great work in saving for the Empire the valuable territory which now forms the Kenya Colony.

The British South Africa Company received its charter in 1889, but we have already dealt with its foundation and early years in our study of South African affairs and we shall have something further to say of its later history in a subsequent chapter. It had a longer life than any other of the African chartered companies and in many ways it filled a larger place in the history of our imperial expansion than any other of the chartered companies before it finally resigned its charter and ceased its work as an organ of government in 1923. In a sense we can say that the era of the modern chartered companies was confined to the last twenty years of the nineteenth century, the period when the territory of the Empire was expanding at its greatest rate. After that period the device was on the decline. In that expansion they played a part of fundamental importance, for they proved an instrument whereby men of vision, determination and practical experience could push on and safeguard British interests at a time when the statesmen in power were unwilling to do so. On the one hand Gladstone and the Gladstonian Liberals were averse to acquiring new dependencies as savouring of the jingoism and nationalism which sullied, as they thought, every imperial scheme. On the other Lord Salisbury and others of the older Conservatives knew little and cared little for remote and undeveloped regions far away from the tangle of European politics on which their minds were concentrated. That men outside the struggles of the parties should

have come forward at that moment to carry on our imperial expansion at their own expense of money and labour was providential for the future of the United Kingdom and the empire-commonwealth, but was entirely in line with the individualism that has been characteristic of our race throughout its history.

The second outstanding feature in the dependencies during this period was the development of the form of government known as the protectorate. The term is an ancient one, but the modern protectorates whose inhabitants are of non-European stock differ widely from the European protectorates of earlier centuries. The earliest use of the term in its modern sense seems to date from France's acquisition of power over Tahiti in the early 'forties. In the face of British opposition she could not proclaim the annexation of the islands as a colony as she had a little earlier done in the Marquesas, but the term *protectorat* was introduced to indicate that she claimed to have a privileged position in regard to the native kingdom of the group. As a matter of fact, however, though the term was never employed there, it was in Britain's relations with the Native States in India that the protectorate system of government was first developed. It was no theoretical device set down ready made in a series of enactments but was gradually evolved to deal with practical difficulties between the time of Warren Hastings and about 1840 when it had recognisably acquired its modern shape.

There are three groups of protectorates in the British Empire:—

1. The Indian group including the Native States of India, which are really protectorates, though the term is not usually given to them, certain protectorates on the coast of Arabia, and certain island groups under the Governments of Ceylon and Mauritius respectively.

2. The Malay group in the Malay Peninsula and the protectorates in the north of Borneo.

3. The African group and certain islands in the Pacific.

Both of these latter groups are under the control of the Secretary of State for the Colonies and it is in connection with them that the system has been specially developed. It was worked out to avoid the practical and costly difficulty involved in establishing direct colonial rule in territories inhabited by peoples of non-European stock when for various reasons they were brought under British

control. The essential thing in regard to all of them, whatever the form of their internal government, is that they are excluded from all dealings with foreign Powers and that the relations between each state and those outside it are wholly conducted by the Imperial Government.

The protectorates are of two types, first, those in which there is an organised government capable of conducting negotiations and signing a treaty. The outstanding examples are in the Malay States and it was there, if we leave out the Native States of India, that the development of the system during our period can best be studied. Secondly there are the protectorates in which the native inhabitants are still in the tribal stage. The development of this type of protectorate has taken place in Tropical Africa and most of them are now to be found there. In the first type although all external affairs are dealt with by the Imperial Government there is little or no direct interference with internal affairs and the influence of the protecting power is exercised through the British Resident who advises the sovereign but does not supplant him. In the second type the general government is carried on by a British Commissioner, working through the tribal chiefs according to native law and custom, but responsible for the preservation of order and the advancement of the native inhabitants. In both types there is indirect rule, native institutions and traditions are respected and progress takes place by infusing a new spirit into traditional methods.

We have already dealt at some length with the economic development of Malaya and here we are only concerned with its political history which both made that development possible and has been moulded by it. Before 1874 the only prosperous and orderly part of the Peninsula was the narrow territory in the south within the directly administered British colony of the Straits Settlements with its capital at Singapore which had been purchased by Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles from the neighbouring Sultan of Johore. The remainder of the Peninsula was divided into petty sultanates or states each with its own feudal upper class of nobles tyrannising over a poverty-stricken peasantry who were ground down by taxation and extortions. The little states were often at war with one another, and their oppressed subjects tried to find a relief from their misery in piratical raids on their neighbours and the

shipping that passed their coasts. Down to 1867 the Straits Settlements were under the Government of India and their problems which are so different, for the Malays are of a quite distinct stock, were sadly neglected. When the Colonial Office took over their control, it was possible to make a forward move, and in order to put down the incessant piracy and the costly primitive expeditions it was decided to try a new method which had been tried in West Africa for the suppression of the slave trade.

The experiment began in the state of Perak which had been the principal offender. A British official was sent to reside in the state, but he was murdered and an armed force was sent to exact reparation. In order to avoid annexation it was decided, however, to retain the Malay government under such supervision as would be applied in a disorderly Native State in India. Within a very short time Perak was brought to order, and Selangor was later dealt with in a similar way. During the next twenty years other states received British Residents and prosperity began to grow rapidly because of the economic movements we have described elsewhere. In 1895 the states of Pahang, Perak, Selangor and Negri Sembilan (itself consisting of nine petty chieftaincies) were grouped together for common purposes in a federation under a British Resident-General. These Federated Malay States steadily rose in prosperity but the native administration was not displaced, it continued in the hands of the Malay rulers guided by the advice of the Residents. The larger state of Johore came under British protection in relation to external affairs in 1885 but it did not join the federation, and it was not until 1910 that the Sultan accepted the advice of a British Resident in its administration.

The northern part of the Peninsula had for centuries been under the paramountcy of Siam, but it was divided like the south into various petty states. There had been many difficulties in regard to Malay affairs between Great Britain and Siam, but in 1909 a treaty was arranged whereby the states were divided between the two powers. The states with a majority of Malays were recognised as British protectorates, while those further to the north where there was a considerable population of Siamese became a part of the Kingdom of Siam. The states that came under British protection were Kedah, Kelantan, Perlis and Treng-

ganu and since 1909 they have had a similar history to the other Malay States.

In the administration of the Malay population there is a benevolent autocracy working through the traditional aristocracy with which they are familiar. But whereas in the old days the nobles were the oppressors of the peasantry, they are now their leaders in carrying out the advice given by the British Residents. The introduction of order has given the states a security and prosperity such as they had never known. Capital and labour are provided by the large number of Chinese and Indian immigrants, while the Malays live on their ancestral lands in peace. Nowhere in the world has the principle of indirect rule through the protectorates been more amply justified than in Malaya, but similar results have been obtained in the protectorates of the Pacific like Tonga where similar methods have been adopted on a smaller scale.

Turning now to the second type of protectorate we find them mainly in Tropical Africa, but before we discuss them we must say a word or two about Nigeria where both types exist side by side. Before the abrogation of the Royal Niger Company's charter in 1899 British power had not penetrated far into the northern interior which differs widely from the unhealthy south. There great Moslem emirates were constantly at war with one another and engaged in slave raiding against the unorganised negro tribes surrounding them. In 1900 the whole country was divided into the two protectorates of Southern and Northern Nigeria. This arrangement persisted until 1913 and the two protectorates had a somewhat different history. The old Niger Coast Protectorate was absorbed into Southern Nigeria and in 1906 the colony of Lagos was added. But it was in Northern Nigeria that the most striking advance was made.

Considerable military operations had to be undertaken to bring the Muslim emirates to order, and these were undertaken by Sir F. D. Lugard with a force of negro troops from British West Africa commanded by British officers. The force seemed disproportionate to its task, for the country is vast and without regular means of communication, and the emirates with their despotic power over their subjects seemed very strong. However skill and audacity overcome all the obstacles and the British were welcomed as deliverers from the capricious tyranny from which the whole

region had suffered for centuries. The pacification was completed within the three years between 1900 when the Company's officers entered the service of the Crown and 1903 when the fortified cities of Kano and Sokoto, which had been the centres of the slave trade, fell into the hands of Sir Frederick Lugard's troops. The replacement of the native government by a complete colonial administration was obviously impossible with the very small force of British officials available and it was decided to retain the native institutions under the guidance of British residents on the system that had been so successful in the Malay states. The great chiefs and the village headmen were retained and native institutions and customs were interfered with as little as possible. But they were infused with British principles of justice and equity, and where there had been extortion and tyranny they were replaced by impartial and consistent administration for the well-being of the governed. Slavery was allowed to die out, for no new slaves were permitted to be acquired and gradually under the guidance of a small number of British officials the whole of Northern Nigeria was converted into a prosperous and contented group of protectorates each with its Resident under a Resident-General, corresponding to a Governor for the whole territory.

While Northern Nigeria was thus being organised similar tasks were being undertaken in the Southern Protectorate. Some military operations were necessary, but they were not on the same scale as in the north and they were rapidly successful in pacifying the territory. But conditions were different, for there were no organised native states like the emirates, and the negroes were all in the tribal stage. The type of protectorate government established was the second of those we distinguished above. Experience of it had been gained in the protectorate behind the colony of Sierra Leone where it had first been introduced as a measure for the suppression of the slave trade in the middle of the nineteenth century and considerable experience had also been learned in South Africa among the Basutos, the Bechuanas and other tribes. The tribal government is left untouched, but the maintenance of peace and order is entrusted to a British commissioner with a few assistants. The tribal chiefs entrust their sovereign rights both in external and internal affairs to the Crown, and by the exertions of the commissioners the native rule is gradually infused with

British ideas of justice and equity without the upheaval and breakdown of the native traditions and social system which an abrupt introduction of direct colonial government would have entailed.

An interesting example of the introduction of a similar protectorate system is to be noted in the Ashanti kingdom which, as we have seen earlier, had been such a source of danger to the Gold Coast colony. In the early 'seventies the Ashantis had caused much trouble by their raids upon tribes under British protection and in 1874 an expedition was sent against them under the command of Sir Garnet Wolseley and they were compelled to sue for peace. A treaty was made with them by which their king promised good behaviour, but its provisions were repeatedly broken and the troubles came to a head twenty years later when by the international agreements following the partition of Africa Ashanti had been recognised as lying within the British sphere of influence. King Prempeh refused to recognise a British protectorate over his kingdom and receive a British resident at Kumasi which was then a centre of barbarous misrule. In 1895 it was decided to bring him to terms by the despatch of a military expedition. It was so carefully organised and carried out that the king submitted without fighting in 1896, but in 1900 a serious rebellion broke out in Kumasi and among various Ashanti tribes. Another expedition had to be undertaken for its suppression, and after it had succeeded in putting down disorder by the use of disciplined West African forces under British officers Ashanti was finally annexed in 1901.

It was given a protectorate government under the Governor of the Gold Coast colony and thenceforward the condition of affairs steadily improved. The type of protectorate adopted was more akin to the second form, but the authority of the tribal chiefs was fully maintained and native laws and customs recognised where they were not incompatible with the ideals of British justice. With the removal of the menace of an irresponsible native power the peace of West Africa was secure, and it may be claimed that Ashanti is a striking example of the success of indirect rule.

It is unnecessary to pursue further the many instances of a similar sort to be found in the British dependencies, for the system

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was much the same in every instance and it may be said that the device of protectorate rule has proved of as great importance in the organisation of the dependencies as responsible government has been in the self-governing dominions.

CHAPTER XXI

THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN WORLD POLITICS, 1903-10

DURING the twelve years succeeding the Jameson Raid of 1895 South African affairs commanded a far greater share of public interest than all the rest of the Empire put together, but after the conclusion of peace in 1902 that interest gradually waned. International relations became more difficult and critical than they had been for many years, and even the ordinary citizen slowly began to realise that it was not the United Kingdom alone but the Empire as a whole that was concerned in them. The growth of that consciousness is the main subject of this chapter, but, before we turn to it, we must say something of the later events in South Africa after the point at which we left them when Joseph Chamberlain came back from his South African journey in 1903. Those events played a large part in bringing about the overturn in British politics in 1905-6 which placed in power the Liberal Ministry that had to deal with a more critical situation in world affairs than any since the downfall of Napoleon in 1814-15. In a sense, therefore, the clearing-up of the aftermath of the South African struggle was a prologue to later events and, although it will involve some overlapping in time, we must consider that side of our story first down to the unification of South Africa by the South Africa Act of 1909.

The loudest outcry over Lord Milner's reconstruction plans arose on the measure adopted to supply the crippling deficiency of labour for the mines of the Witwatersrand that the war had left. During the war years the sources from which the mines obtained their unskilled labour had dried up. The natives had earned much higher wages in the service of the army than they had ever enjoyed before. They would not return to the irksome conditions of the mining compounds, but preferred to remain in idleness in their kraals, while their women did the work needed for their subsistence, and despite the efforts of the companies they could not be tempted back to hard labour. But it was essential for the restoration of the economic system of the country that the mining

industry should be set going again. A new source of labour must be found, and it was proposed to introduce indentured Chinese coolies such as those who did the unskilled work in the mines of the Far East.

The suggestion was made to Chamberlain when he was at Johannesburg in October 1903, but he would not agree, and Lord Milner, who was at first hostile, was only persuaded with difficulty to accept the recommendations of the Labour Commission which supported the plan because they were emphatically of opinion that there was no other way out but to employ Chinese for a time under stringently guarded conditions of repatriation when their indentures were finished. The Legislative Council of the Transvaal, which was composed almost equally of unofficial and official members, accepted the plan with an overwhelming majority, and there is no doubt that opinion in the Transvaal was not opposed at the beginning. The first Chinese arrived in the early months of 1904, and a great improvement in the economic position followed at once. It is important to remember these facts in view of the play made with the Chinese Labour Ordinance in British politics.

We have already mentioned how the Liberals were making use of the differences of opinion about imperial matters among their opponents and the public at large to further their appeal to the electorate. It was the last spurt of the dying cause of "Little Englandism," but it cannot be denied that its advocates made very effective use of anti-imperialist doctrines to play upon the general public weariness of the Unionist party which had been in power for ten years but was now rent from top to bottom over the fiscal controversy at the centre of which lay the question of imperial preference. The Liberals appealed to the deep-seated British detestation of slavery by stigmatising the Chinese Labour Ordinance as nothing but disguised slavery to bolster up the profits of the mining magnates, and led by Sir Henry Campbell Bannerman they made this one of the loudest of their cries in the speeches that preceded the General Election which everyone knew could not be far distant.

They linked the cry against Chinese labour with another foreshadowing indication of what they would do in South Africa if they won a majority. The English-speakers in the Transvaal were

very uneasy under the Crown Colony government which had been established to carry out reconstruction and they agitated for a measure of self-government and free elections at the earliest possible date. Alfred Lyttelton was now Colonial Secretary and, while he was ready to accede to the desire for an elected legislature, he believed that it was necessary to pass through an intermediate stage of representative government before the full implementation of the promise of responsible self-government contained in the terms agreed upon at Vereeniging. He and those who thought with him feared dangers that might arise if a still unreconciled Boer majority were returned to power in the Transvaal. Accordingly he prepared new Constitutions for the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony on a representative basis to come into force in 1905, but, before they could take effect, circumstances had completely changed.

Meanwhile rival associations had been set up in the Transvaal to press for self-government. One, the Transvaal Progressive Association, was contented to proceed by steps but the other, the Transvaal Responsible Government Association, agitated for the immediate grant of responsibility in the form possessed by other dominions, and this reform gained much support in Great Britain. In his speeches Campbell Bannerman harped mainly upon the evils of the Unionist policy in regard to Chinese labour, but he also implied that the Liberals, if returned to power, would scrap the new Lyttelton Constitutions and go further. The Boer leaders under Botha stood aside from these controversies, but they formed their own association, *Het Volk*, to prepare for self-government in the fullest measure and it was with knowledge of their ideas and wishes that the Liberal policy was designed.

Lord Milner resigned the High Commissionership in April 1905 and only a short while before they left office the Unionist Cabinet appointed the Earl of Selborne to succeed him. The General Election of 1906 resulted in an overwhelming defeat for the Unionists, and one of the earliest acts of the new Colonial Secretary, the Earl of Elgin, was to announce through Lord Selborne that not only would Chinese immigration at once be stopped but that the Lyttelton Constitutions would be replaced by new instruments introducing responsible self-government into the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. This intention was

carried into effect and the first election in the Transvaal took place in February 1907. Het Volk secured a large majority and General Botha took office as Premier. In the Orange Free State a Boer ministry came into power a little later with General Hertzog as its most influential member.

Thus in 1907 each of the governments in South Africa was directly responsible to the enfranchised electorate and therefore had equal status, and the way was for the first time clear for a concerted movement towards federation or unification within the circle of the British Empire. The story of the achievement of that aim is of great interest, but its details belong rather to South African than to general imperial history and we need only record their results. Things were in a very critical position, for a widespread though unorganised native revolt had swept through the Zulus in Natal in 1906, and it demanded considerable military forces to suppress it. The Zulu revolt revealed to South Africa the dangers arising from the division of control between a number of self-governing units, no one of which was powerful enough to cope with a serious native rising, for Natal had had to call upon imperial help and this had necessarily led to some interference with its rights of self-government. Only a federal or unified government of all white South Africa would be strong enough to do without outside help, and though there were many other reasons favouring union, it was the native question above all that was predominant in the minds of thinking people and led them at last to contemplate seriously the idea that had first been mooted in the time of Sir George Grey fifty years before in order to grapple effectively with the relations between white and black in the sub-continent.

The Cape Colony in 1906 was passing through a time of depression and Dr. Jameson's ministry which was then in power held office by only the most precarious tenure. In the last few months of his tenure of office, however, Jameson was persuaded by a group of the young men who had assisted Lord Milner in his work of reconstruction, to take the first step to promote a scheme of federation, and at the suggestion of Patrick Duncan, then Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal, and Lionel Curtis organised Closer Union Societies were founded throughout the colonies to mould public opinion in favour of the change. They drew up a reasoned

exposition of the case, and in November 1906 Jameson as Premier of the Cape formally appealed to Lord Selborne as High Commissioner to review the general position in South Africa so that its people might have an opportunity of expressing their opinion on the desirability of a central national government. Selborne consulted the governments of the other colonies on Jameson's request, and, finding them favourable, on January 1st, 1907, he issued the celebrated exposition which is called after him the Selborne Memorandum. Before the popular discussion of its thesis could reach some measure of unanimity among men of different stock and upbringing Jameson was driven from office by the sweeping victory of the Bond in the general election in Cape Colony. The change was important, for it placed the responsibility squarely upon the shoulders of the Afrikaners themselves. In Cape Colony, the Transvaal and the Orange Free State alike an Afrikaans-speaking majority was in power and only in Natal did the English-speaking South Africans hold control. There was no influential party that wanted to go back on the Treaty of Vereeniging and it was union as a self-governing Dominion within the British Empire that was the measure they had to consider.

The actual first step to practical consideration of the difficulties of South Africa as set out in the Selborne Memorandum came from the economic side as it had done in British North America forty years before. It was at the Bloemfontein Conference on railway and customs affairs that the summoning of a National Convention was recommended and the recommendation was accepted by the legislatures of each of the colonies. The Convention met first in Durban in October 1908 and after adjournment to Cape Town complete agreement was reached in February 1909. A draft Act of Union was prepared and submitted to each of the four colonial legislatures. Their acceptance was signified to a final meeting of the National Convention in May 1909 and forwarded to the Imperial Government. The measure was passed by Parliament without amendment and on May 31st, 1910, it came into effect and the Union of South Africa stood alongside the Dominion of Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia and the Dominion of New Zealand as a single self-governing unit within the British Empire. Rhodes's concept had triumphed at

last. The achievement of that result immediately before the crisis of the Empire's fate, which was fast approaching, was of outstanding importance and significance. Separate colonies and divided control would never have been strong enough to combat internal revolt and external attack, and not only would it have been difficult to retain South Africa but the campaigns in the tropical regions to the North would have been much more arduous. Only the Union was strong enough to deal with the crisis and it is for this reason that its achievement at that particular moment was such a vital event in the history of the Empire-Commonwealth.

Before we take up the main subject of this chapter which is the re-alignment of the Great Powers and its effect upon the outer British Empire, we must say a word or two about our relations with the United States which lie somewhat apart. Those relations had been entirely uneventful since the settlement of the *Alabama* controversy in the early 'seventies, but in 1895 there was an acute dispute about the frontier between Venezuela and British Guiana which aroused some heat owing to the intervention of the United States. The frontier had been in dispute ever since the middle of the nineteenth century and on more than one occasion it had led to a severance of diplomatic relations between Great Britain and Venezuela. In 1895 the United States sounded the Foreign Office as to whether we would accept American mediation and received a not unfavourable reply. In return, however, President Cleveland's Secretary of State, Mr. Olney, put forward most contentiously the view that the British claims were a challenge to the Monroe Doctrine and implied the forcible assumption of control over an American State. Lord Salisbury, who had just assumed office, contested this very sweeping claim and for some months there was a good deal of heated controversy. However, at the end of 1896 both sides had cooled down over what was, after all, not a question of major importance, and early in 1897 a treaty was agreed to by which the frontier was referred to arbitration by a tribunal on which there was British, Venezuelan and United States representation. The award was agreed upon in 1899 and the greater part of the disputed territory was allotted to British Guiana.

Other minor disputes between Great Britain and the United States during this period concerned the seal fisheries in the Bering Sea and the boundary between the Dominion of Canada and Alaska, but in each case they were settled by arbitration to the general satisfaction of both sides. The old question concerning the construction of a Trans-Isthmian canal was brought up again during the same period and was finally settled by the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty of 1901 by which Great Britain acquiesced in the construction of a Panama Canal under American control subject to the maintenance of the general principle of its neutralisation so that it could be freely used by all nations.

This general atmosphere of reasonableness in international relations in the New World was very different from what was going on in the Old. The great change in international alignment, which had such a profound effect on the fortunes of the Empire, may be dated from Lord Salisbury's resignation from the Premiership in July 1902. The Foreign Secretaryship he had already relinquished to Lord Lansdowne in 1900, but his influence was still very powerful, and that influence was generally averse to any close rapprochement with a European Power. During his last ministry there had been repeated difficulties with France which almost always were concerned with extra-European questions. The continued British occupation of Egypt was a constant source of irritation, the Fashoda incident and difficulties over Siam had roused warm feelings both in France and Britain and there was incessant diplomatic bickering over petty colonial questions in various parts of the world, which had been discussed between the two Powers for many years without any solution being reached. None of them was of outstanding importance, but they produced an atmosphere of conspicuous sensitiveness which was fatal to friendly relations. Lord Lansdowne, however, was an acknowledged Francophile, and from the beginning he was determined to work for an Anglo-French understanding to counter-balance the dangers that seemed likely to spring from the progressive deterioration of our relations with the ever more ambitious and aggressive Germany of Wilhelm II. In such a desire Lansdowne had the warm approval of the new King Edward VII, and he was assured of the support of his colleagues in the Balfour Cabinet who were antagonised by the inimical attitude of Germany during

the South African war and saw the Kaiser as an inveterate enemy to our imperial power.

The grant of imperial preference by Canada in 1897 led to a formal protest from Germany that it was a breach of the most-favoured-nation treatment accorded by our commercial treaty with her which dated from 1867. This led to the British denunciation of the treaty and thenceforward from 1899 onwards the commercial relations of the British Empire with Germany were regulated by a provisional agreement renewed annually, from which Canada was excluded. This arrangement was to come to an end in 1903, but Lansdowne was informed that Germany would not extend it further unless Canada withdrew imperial preference and South Africa refrained from the projected introduction of such a measure. Canada retaliated by the imposition of an additional ten per cent. duty on any nation refusing to her most-favoured-nation treatment, and Germany demanded that Great Britain should secure its withdrawal. But of course the reply was given that the United Kingdom had no control over the tariffs of the self-governing Dominions. The matter was clearly of great imperial importance since it indicated Germany's readiness to affront imperial pride by trying to intervene in relations between the United Kingdom and the self-governing Dominions, an attempt that demanded and received immediate and unmistakable repudiation.

But the main cause of Anglo-German tension was the resolve of Germany to build a formidable fleet which could be meant as nothing but a challenge to Britain's sea-power on which her empire depends. It was at the height of the South African war in 1900 that that resolve was brought out into the open, but it would be foreign to our present purpose to trace the various steps by which the challenge was made more and more dangerous in the succeeding years. It demanded reply and when Sir John Fisher became First Sea Lord in 1904 a drastic reform in the organisation and distribution of the British fleet was begun. Our position in the Far East was safeguarded by the conclusion of the Japanese Alliance and the larger ships were brought back from the China station to strengthen the Channel and the Atlantic Fleets. In 1905 the *Dreadnought*, the strongest and most heavily armed battleship in the world, was laid down, and the race in construction began

that was the most serious portent of coming events. The life of the Empire is bound up with its naval power and by the acceptance of the German challenge Britain showed beyond doubt that she understood it as she has done at every crisis in her history.

While our relations with Germany were thus moving from bad to worse, those with France became more cordial. Lansdowne's new policy was brought out into the open by the official speeches during King Edward VII's visit to Paris in May 1903 and the return visit of President Loubet to London three months later. The old atmosphere of estrangement and suspicion was swept away and M. Delcassé, the French Foreign Minister, and Lord Lansdowne could proceed with the delicate negotiations that led to the conclusion of the *Entente Cordiale* in 1904. The first step was to deal with the points raised by Lord Cromer concerning the position in Egypt. The reforms carried out during the British occupation had completely restored the condition of the finances, but it was impossible to make use of the recurring surpluses for the improvement of the country owing to the antiquated shackles of the international capitulations. France had always taken the lead of the Powers in obstructing their reform from considerations of prestige, but responsible French leaders had gradually come to the opinion, especially since the Fashoda episode, that their obstructive attitude was out-of-date and damaging to France's material interests. Delcassé was therefore ready to negotiate and effect a compromise whereby Britain's dominant interests in Egypt should be recognised in return for compensation to France elsewhere. By her development of Algeria in the north and Senegal to the south France had a special and growing interest in the north-west corner of the African continent and especially in the still-independent country of Morocco. She had secured Italy's benevolent attitude by a recognition of the special interests of that Power in Tripoli which was still a possession of Turkey. There was clearly here an opportunity for give and take, and Delcassé and Lansdowne were able to arrange a mutual agreement.

Similar opportunities presented themselves in many parts of the outer world. The division of British and French spheres of influence in the outer parts of the Kingdom of Siam, leaving its central part in complete independence without interference, was of great

benefit to British Malaya and French Indo-China. The clearing-away of the irritating difficulties concerning French rights on the shore of Newfoundland, which dated from the Treaty of Utrecht of 1713, at last set that colony free to develop its resources without interference and put it on the road towards some measure of prosperity. In West Africa France desired to round off the boundaries of the protectorates she had included in her great new African Empire, and we could readily consent to satisfy her without harming or seriously truncating our own colonies and protectorates. In Madagascar, the New Hebrides and certain small island groups in the Pacific similar minor adjustments were worked out and finally in 1904 and a little later treaties were concluded by which the long-standing colonial rivalries of the two Powers were brought to an end. This common-sense solution was warmly welcomed by all parties in Great Britain, and, though some French statesmen attacked Delcassé for having struck a bad bargain, they were at last convinced that the importance of the *Entente Cordiale* in major international affairs was such as to overshadow all lesser points.

France was in alliance with Russia and the conclusion of the *Entente Cordiale* obviously afforded an opportunity for a similar clearing up of difficulties between her two friends. But in 1904-5 Russia was engaged in war with Japan who was the ally of Great Britain and the negotiations had to wait. They could not be taken up until 1906 but they proceeded smoothly until agreement was reached in 1907. The differences that had to be reconciled were all concerned with the countries bordering upon the Indian frontier. Persia was then in a weak and disordered state and there had been much Anglo-Russian rivalry in attempts to secure railway and other concessions from the Shah. Russia's special interests in Northern Persia were recognised by the agreement and Britain's in that part of the country bordering on the Persian Gulf. The central part of the Shah's realms was to be a sphere in which there was no special influence of either party. Each bound itself to respect the independence and integrity of Afghanistan and to abstain from all interference in Tibet. It seemed as though the safety of the North-West frontier of India which had so long been the bugbear of British statesmen was at last assured, and the Anglo-Russian agreement was generally welcomed as a con-

siderable achievement, but things were moving so rapidly to a crisis that it proved to be not of very long duration.

While the affairs of the Middle East were thus being settled for a time, those of the Near East were giving great concern to our statesmen. It will be remembered that after the Congress of Berlin of 1878 Britain pledged herself to defend the integrity of the Turkish Empire and that Cyprus had been handed over to British occupation in pledge. But the relations between Great Britain and Turkey did not long remain on a footing of friendship, for British opinion was outraged by the Sultan's misgovernment and tyranny. During the later 'nineties the Armenian Massacres under Sultan Abdul Hamid rendered any continuance of Anglo-Turkish friendship impossible, and Germany seized the opportunity to step in and cultivate the Sultan in order to secure in the first place lucrative concessions for the construction of railways in Asiatic Turkey. But there were greater strategic designs in the background and the Kaiser and his ministers from 1902 were planning to secure influence through Asia Minor and Mesopotamia right down to the Persian Gulf which was bound to conflict with traditional British interests, for that was the age-old overland route to India. These designs were bound up with the construction of a railway from Aleppo to Baghdad and the struggle between Great Britain and Germany from 1907 onwards and possibly earlier centred on this Baghdad railway project.

Germany had obtained from the Sultan a far-reaching concession which not only gave her the right to finance and construct the railway but also conferred extensive advantages in the river navigation of the Euphrates and Tigris and power to exploit the minerals of the region. The oil-fields of Mosul had not yet been opened and become of the importance of a later period, but there were known to be many mineral deposits of importance in the mountains of Asia Minor and these were an important consideration in the plan. In 1903 Germany invited French and British participation in the concession while still retaining for herself the leading share. Britain refused to join unless there were absolute equality between the three partners and when Germany refused the negotiations broke down. Britain was therefore regarded by both the Germans and the Turks as obstructing a plan of great material promise in order to safeguard her own

interests and the antagonism came to a head over the question of the terminus of the line which the Germans planned to be at Koweit on the Persian Gulf. This port was in the domains of an Arab sheik who had long been bound by treaty with the Government of India, and British consent was therefore necessary for the construction of a port upon his territory. It was upon this point that British and German interests came into acute opposition, but as that did not come until 1913 we will deal with it later.

CHAPTER XXII

THE TESTING OF THE EMPIRE COMMONWEALTH

THERE is no doubt that Germany embarked upon her policy of challenging Great Britain in the belief that the British Empire was rapidly falling to pieces. Her rulers could understand the old system in which the United Kingdom was the mistress of the colonies and what the British Cabinet decided had to be carried out by the subjects of the Crown everywhere. They entirely failed to understand what was meant by self-government, and the statement that Canada decided her own tariff policy without any interference by the Government of the United Kingdom was entirely disbelieved. It was either another instance of British hypocrisy, or it meant that the Dominion had moved far on the road to independence and that before long she would do as the United States had done and sever the last ties between her and the Crown. Nor was Germany alone in thinking thus. The profound changes that had taken place in the status of the self-governing dominions were an enigma to all foreign observers, and, though our friends hoped that those changes had not impaired Great Britain's strength as a world-power, they could hardly believe it. To them the Government in London was all that mattered and they could not realise that in Ottawa and the other Dominion capitals there were other Governments and legislatures whose policy and point of view were of increasing importance in international affairs. It took the tremendous struggle of the world war to make them acknowledge it as a fact that must be taken into calculation, but even then it remained inexplicable.

The fundamental changes that had come about were not fully realised even within the Empire itself, neither in the United Kingdom nor the Dominions. They were not the conscious work either of a single party or a single generation ; they had *grown* imperceptibly as any living organism grows and adapts itself to its environment. The process of growth and shaping of our imperial relations was unprecedentedly fast in the period with which we

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are dealing and it was repeatedly illustrated how the intuitive political sense of the peoples of the Empire recoiled instinctively from cut and dried solutions of its problems. When any logical and systematic plan was proposed, they always saw first its defects and dangers and were quite unimpressed by its theoretical symmetry. Things in fact were shaping themselves in the traditional English fashion to meet practical circumstances as they arose without casting away the advantages already won.

At the Colonial Conference of 1902 under Chamberlain it was recommended that future meetings should be held every four years and the idea was generally welcomed. This meant that such meetings for taking counsel had established themselves in imperial practice without committing anyone to formal constitutional changes. In 1905 Mr. Lyttelton, then Colonial Secretary, proposed to the Dominions that a permanent commission should be set up in London to prepare the agenda for the successive Conferences, but Canada rejected the proposal on the ground that it might infringe the autonomy of the various Governments, which they treasured as the distinctive attribute of Dominion status.

The Conference that should have been held in 1906 was postponed owing to the change of ministry in Great Britain. It was held in 1907, however, and made important recommendations which were adopted. The old name of Colonial Conference was changed to that of the Imperial Conference, and, whereas the Colonial Secretary had been in the chair, henceforward the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom was to preside and the premiers of all the self-governing dominions were to be *ex officio* members. They might be accompanied by whichever of their colleagues they chose, but voting was to be by units and not by individuals. It was agreed that an Imperial General Staff should be created to co-ordinate defence plans for the whole Empire in consultation with each of its parts. There was no common desire to set up a permanent commission, as Lyttelton had proposed, but the practical step necessary was achieved by the establishment of a separate Dominions Department in the Colonial Office and entrusting to its officials in addition to their work of negotiation with the Dominions the business of the Imperial Conference.

The flexibility of the membership of the Conference is one of its most striking features, but it is in line with a practice that was

becoming the vogue, that of adapting the composition of a consultative body to the matters to be discussed and not keeping to a rigidly pre-determined list of members chosen because of their offices. Thus the Committee of Imperial Defence in the United Kingdom founded by Mr. Balfour in 1903-4 under the presidency of the Prime Minister varies in composition according to the matters to be discussed and to his judgment of those whose attendance is desirable. It has a permanent secretariat and so continuity is preserved, and the same device has been employed for the Imperial Conferences.

Another flexible feature was evolved by the calling of subsidiary Imperial Conferences to discuss particular points and the first was summoned in 1909 solely to consider in concert with the Dominions the problems of imperial defence which were daily becoming more and more insistent. At this conference it was agreed to establish separate Australian and New Zealand naval squadrons to be maintained at the expense of the Dominions concerned but organised in close co-ordination with the Royal Navy. Thus for the first time the Dominion navies came into existence which were to render such admirable service during the subsequent war.

The next full Imperial Conference met in 1911 and the international crisis which was rapidly shaping itself cast its shadow over all its discussions. Questions of imperial defence were referred to an enlarged Committee of Imperial Defence where the strategical plans involved could be dealt with in secret. To the Committee the Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, was thus enabled to give in confidence some enlightenment on the dangers that were menacing peace. In the Conference itself one of the principal subjects of discussion was the proposal of the Premier of New Zealand, Sir Joseph Ward, for the establishment of an Imperial Parliament in which the United Kingdom and the Dominions should be represented, but the proposal attracted little support, for the fear that such a body as an Imperial Council could not fail to infringe autonomy was fatal.

The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Mr. Asquith, however based his opposition to the proposal on other grounds. He maintained that the responsibility of the Imperial Government in foreign affairs, treaties, war and peace must remain unimpaired

and could be shared with none. That was undoubtedly the legal position, but just as the United Kingdom was mistress of her own actions, so must the other nations of the Commonwealth be of theirs. The legal position in fact no longer represented the actual situation which had never been crystallised into words. It was all very well to say that the Imperial Government could alone conduct foreign relations, but Canada had proved that she had an influence in shaping policy by what she had done with Germany and the United States. There the Dominion Cabinet had decided what they wanted to do and the Foreign Office had carried it out. It might be said that the matters dealt with had been of minor economic and commercial importance, but really they were not without their influence in the political sphere, as we have shown in the Canadian-German controversy.

In this conflict of ideas it was the obvious and immediate gravity of the world crisis that induced agreement. Besides the confidential and technical information that was given to the Committee of Imperial Defence, Sir Edward Grey expounded the international situation in more general terms to a secret session of the whole Conference. After its revelations practical prudence clearly demanded agreement, and it was unanimously resolved that thenceforward the negotiations for any treaties or conventions affecting the Dominions must be carried on by envoys acting not upon instructions prepared in the Foreign Office alone but upon those drawn up in consultation with all the Governments concerned.

Things had obviously gone far beyond the legal position of Asquith's speech. The Dominions were no longer dependents but partners in the imperial adventure. No more could the Imperial Government so-called, which was in reality only the Government of the United Kingdom, make agreements binding the Dominions without consulting them. In the face of this generally held sentiment which was voiced most clearly by General Botha, the Premier of the Union of South Africa, Asquith's legalism was out of place and the Conference separated with the Dominion statesmen far more satisfied than they had been in its early meetings. They went back home with fuller knowledge and understanding of the world situation and they were thus prepared to lead their communities to the making of decisions of out-

standing gravity when the time came, three years later. In a very real sense the Imperial Conference of 1911 was the most important of the series and it was truly a turning-point in the history of the Empire-Commonwealth.

The conclusion of the treaties and declarations of the *Entente Cordiale* were a very serious blow to Germany, for she could no longer count on playing off the jealousies of the two Western Powers when she wanted to secure a colonial advantage. Henceforward Morocco took a prominent place in her plans, though she had few special interests there. Britain, France and the Dominions on the other hand were vitally interested and they could not tamely sit by while an unfriendly Power established herself at the gateway of their essential route of communication. But Germany strove all she could to drive a wedge between her rivals, and part of this was effected by pin-pricks in Morocco. The principal architect of the new rapprochement had been Delcassé and he was therefore the object of the German attack. Since neither Britain nor France wished to drive matters to an extreme, they consented to meet Germany in Conference for the discussion of the Morocco question and at Algeciras in 1906 France showed herself prepared to offer something to Germany in return for the recognition of her special interests in Morocco. The compensation took the form of a cession of a part of the French colony of the Congo which was added to the German Cameroons.

This decision involved Delcassé's resignation and it seemed as though Germany had won the first round in the struggle, but it only whetted the appetite of the German colonial party for more. Despite the promises that had been made, they were determined to obstruct every French advance. When France intervened in the Moroccan civil war and sent troops to Fez in 1911, Germany again demanded that she should be consulted. The Kaiser ordered a gunboat, the *Panther*, to Agadir, a small port in Southern Morocco, a gesture that was clearly intended to intimidate France, but this time she would not give way. She was willing to make some adjustments of the Cameroons frontier in return for a formal recognition of a French protectorate in Morocco, but being assured of British support she would go no further. It was while these questions of the Agadir crisis were in the air that the Dominions representatives were in consultation and the effect of the practical

illustration was to convince everyone of the need of common action for defence.

Between 1911 and 1914 the increasingly embittered diplomatic struggle was concerned almost entirely with European problems with which our attention need not be concerned, but in the increasing influence of Germany in the Turkish Empire which she was building up to further her Balkan policy, her schemes for the Baghdad Railway were not lost sight of. Its construction went on steadily under German engineers, but by 1913 the question of its terminus on the Persian Gulf had not yet been settled. German shipping lines were started to the ports of the Gulf with little hopes of profit and a good deal of money was spent to cultivate relations with the Arab sheiks and the Persian officials in the coast ports. Sir Edward Grey went very far in his efforts for conciliation, but he would not consent to impair our traditional position and interests in the region. The question of Koweit was still under discussion in 1913-14, but we would not give way and the southern terminus of the Baghdad Railway was still unsettled when war broke out and the whole situation was permanently changed.

When the decisive moment came and we passed from peace into war, the responsibility for the decision rested entirely upon the Ministry and Parliament of the United Kingdom, but it was the crucial test for the unity of the Empire-Commonwealth. When the King-Emperor formally declared himself in a state of war with Germany on August 4th, 1914, automatically every one of his subjects, in whatever part of the Empire they might be, was legally at war. But did that legal fact represent the actual position? That was the testing question.

No demand was made upon the self-governing Dominions for assistance, either naval, military or financial. Their autonomy was scrupulously preserved and their decisions as to whether they would take their part in the common defence were their own responsibility, but the answer was unmistakable.

Canada, Australia and New Zealand made their decision without a moment's hesitation, but it was naturally in South Africa that the position was most difficult, for during the critical days of awaiting the outbreak General Hertzog and others had maintained that the Union should take up a position of neutrality. Within five days, however, under the lead of the Premier,

General Louis Botha, the Union Parliament decided by an overwhelming majority to take up the same position as the other Dominions. On August 10th, it resolved with only twelve dissentients to take all measures necessary for defending the interests of the Union against the common enemy and for co-operating with His Majesty's Imperial Government to maintain the security and integrity of the Empire. It was only twelve years since the signing of the Treaty of Vereeniging, but that the policy of conciliation and liberty then adopted had abundantly been justified was proved beyond a shadow of doubt.

But though the vast majority of his people followed General Botha in his statesmanlike course there was a group of irreconcilables who saw in the preoccupation of Britain with a greater enemy an opportunity of taking up again the arms that they had reluctantly been compelled to lay down in 1902. The Germans had been looking forward to a revolt in South Africa for years and they aided Commandant Maritz with a force of Boer malcontents to cross from German South-West Africa into Union territory soon after the outbreak of the war. But they were grievously disappointed in the small number of Afrikaners who came to join them and before the end of the year Botha, using almost entirely Afrikaans-speaking forces to avoid fanning the old racial divisions, had overcome and rounded up the invaders and the rebels. The Union was then ready to exert all its efforts against the common enemy and it will be recalled what a valuable part the South Africans under the lead of Smuts played in the campaigns of the succeeding years.

The story of those campaigns and of the war as a whole belongs to general history and cannot be recounted here. The share of the men from the outer Empire in the war at sea and on land was immense and glorious by the highest standards, but it was merged in that of the whole Empire and the episodes in which men from particular dominions, from India or from the colonies took a leading part cannot properly be separated from the general story if they are to be appreciated at their proper value. We must therefore confine our attention to those aspects of the years of war which have a direct bearing on the progress of imperial relations and they are mainly to be found in the political sphere. The British Empire entered the war as a unit, it fought it as a unit and

as a unit it carried it through to victory and whether one part or another played the leading rôle in any particular episode, it was as a part of an indivisible whole in the struggle against the King's enemies. The Empire which on paper seemed so loosely compacted that they believed it must fall asunder at a challenge proved itself a whole of subtle flexibility with powers of adaptation to infinitely diverse circumstances such as had never been seen before in the world's history. But those powers of adaptation could never have been employed to advantage without strong direction from the centre and it is with this that we are specially concerned.

In the early part of the war the direction of policy lay wholly in the British Cabinet of twenty-three ministers of the Liberal party which had come into power in 1906. The Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith, as we have mentioned, had maintained in the Imperial Conference of 1911 that the responsibility of the Cabinet could not be shared, and there was a general feeling throughout the outer Empire that, although he had acquiesced in the adverse resolution with which the Conference closed, Asquith was still hampered by his adhesion to earlier precedents and that he was not over-sympathetic with the desire of the Dominion Cabinets to co-operate in the formulation of policy as their men were co-operating in the field. Sir Robert Borden expressed the feeling of Canada with unmistakable emphasis when in December 1915 he declared that the responsibility in major issues of policy could no longer rest with the people of the British Isles alone. The same view was expressed with equal emphasis by the Premiers of Australia and New Zealand, and they were strongly supported by the leaders of the Conservative Opposition in the Parliament of the United Kingdom. There must be a drastic change in the cumbrous and outworn system, which might be adapted to the party struggles of the past but was utterly incapable of carrying on the conduct of an all-demanding war. But it was not until the Empire had been fighting for three years that the way was opened to the revolutionary change that was demanded by events in Great Britain *whose results alone need concern us.* In December 1916 Mr. Asquith left office and he was succeeded by Mr. Lloyd George, who as Secretary of State for War had secured the confidence of the country by his vigour and drive. He secured the support of all

parties for what was a real National Government unhampered by the constitutional precedents to which Asquith had so stubbornly adhered, and in place of the traditional Cabinet of more than twenty members he took the supreme power into the hands of a War Cabinet of four members, himself as Prime Minister, Lord Curzon, the leader of the House of Lords, Arthur Henderson, the leader of the Labour Party, and Lord Milner, who had shown his supreme capacity as a war leader in South Africa. With him in power and Mr. Bonar Law as Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of the House of Commons it was evident that the opinion of the outer empire would carry its full weight.

The Colonial Secretary (Mr. Walter Long) without delay summoned the Prime Ministers of the Dominions by cable to come to London to share in a special Imperial War Conference and to sit as full members of the War Cabinet and share in its responsibilities for the conduct of hostilities. The Imperial War Cabinet began its sittings in March 1917, at the very darkest period of the war when Germany's insolent claim to a victorious peace had been unhesitatingly rejected and she had launched her campaign of unrestricted submarine warfare. The meetings were attended besides the British members by the Prime Ministers of Canada, South Africa, New Zealand and Newfoundland with the Secretary of State to speak for India. Mr. W. M. Hughes of Australia could not attend the first sessions which lasted until May 1917 but he was present at the second series of sessions from June to August 1918. It was decided that for the future the Prime Ministers of the Dominions as full members of the Imperial Cabinet should have the right of direct communication with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and thus have full information as to the business dealt with in the intervals between the sessions. Thus a full share of responsibility for the formulation of critical decisions on major matters of imperial policy was shared by the co-ordinate nations which the Dominions had now become.

Concurrently with the meetings of the Imperial War Cabinet in 1917 and 1918 there were sessions of a specially summoned Imperial Conference attended by the visiting Prime Ministers. In 1917 it was resolved that as soon as possible after the termination of hostilities a special Imperial Conference should be called

to consider the future constitutional relations of the various parts of the Empire, but with the proviso that they should preclude the setting-up of an Imperial legislature or executive. The determination to safeguard autonomy was stronger than ever, and it was clear that the Imperial War Cabinet was an exceptional piece of machinery to cope with the circumstances of the crisis and not a step in constitutional growth. It was not properly a Cabinet at all, for the decisions of a majority could not bind a dissentient minority, and it had no direct executive authority. It was a practical device to concentrate the resources of the Empire on a task of over-mastering emergency, the making of victorious war and the establishment of the conditions of the peace that must be discussed with our allies when it was over.

On November 11th, 1918, the Armistice was granted to the Germans and hostilities ceased. At once questions of momentous importance for the action to be taken by the Empire in the negotiations for the peace that must follow presented themselves for decision. The Dominion members of the Imperial War Cabinet had gone back to their homes at the end of July when the imminence of Germany's defeat was unrealised, and now they had to be summoned back to London in haste. Most of them had returned by the end of November and a critical series of meetings began to discuss what was to be done in the forthcoming conference which was to open in Paris early in January. Would the Imperial War Cabinet speak for every part of the Empire as a single whole as it had done during the later stages of the war? That question was decisive as to the nature of the imperial organism and the Dominions answered it unhesitatingly in the negative. They would not admit anyone to pledge them save their own representatives responsible in every case to their particular legislatures and so to their own electorates. Canada expressed this unmistakably when she demanded separate representation at the beginning of December and claimed that the other nations should recognise the unique character of the British Commonwealth as a group of free nations under a single sovereign but each capable of making an independent decision. The demand was at once conceded by the United Kingdom who pressed it upon her somewhat reluctant allies and secured their acceptance. Thus in the Peace Conference Canada, Australia and South Africa were each represented by two

delegates, and New Zealand by one, who took up a position equal in every respect with that of the delegates of the other smaller Powers. But those of their delegates of outstanding personal influence like General Smuts also took part in the Conference as members of the British Empire delegation of five members and they played a leading rôle in its deliberations and negotiations in committee.

This arrangement by which the British Empire appeared both as one and many was little liked by the representatives of the other Allied Powers, because it seemed both incomprehensible and illogical, but since the Empire demanded it with one voice and since the British nations had contributed such an immense share to the victory, they acquiesced and as has so often been the case with our devices in political matters it proved practical. To the people of the Dominions the decision was of fundamental interest. Their full co-ordinate nationhood was at last recognised and the Empire stood forth as a league of free nations within the wider League of Nations which was then being established upon the terms of the Covenant. Subsequent events have weakened the world League of Nations and have disappointed its hopes, but the league of the British Commonwealth has proved of immense value for protecting the common ideas of its members while completely safeguarding their autonomy.

When the time came for the signing of the Treaties of Peace the nationhood of the Dominions was formally recognised by the procedure adopted. In each case the adhesion of a Dominion was signified by the attachment of the signatures of its delegates and the subsequent ratification by its legislature. The United Kingdom delegates signed only for the central realms and the colonial dependencies, and adhesion was signified by the ratification of Parliament, but the position of India was anomalous. The Secretary of State for India signed on her behalf so that India was not placed in the position of a dependency like Ceylon nor yet as a Dominion like Canada. Clearly things were in an intermediate stage and we shall discuss them in our next chapter.

Looking back on the whole testing-time between 1914 and 1919 solely from the standpoint of our Imperial relations we can see how magnificently the king's realms had passed through the ordeal. They had emerged from it no longer merely as an Empire

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free from the interference of foreign Powers but as an Empire-Commonwealth of free and equal peoples kept in association not by any formal ties but because they have a common attitude to the rest of the world.

CHAPTER XXIII

INDIA AND CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM, 1914-39

As we come to the last years of our period and have to deal with problems as yet unsettled, the content of imperial history as distinguished from the general history of the time becomes more and more difficult to decide. Each of the autonomous units of the Empire-Commonwealth has its own clearly defined domestic history, though once the final goal of complete self-government has been reached it is uneventful and the development is almost entirely in the economic sphere. Beyond their own borders the compelling causes guiding the course of events in the self-governing units of the Empire are to be found rather in the general relation of the world Powers than in any special intra-imperial happenings and so they form the background of our subject and not the subject itself. But there was one part of the Empire in which internal movements were of significant importance as affecting the rest of the King's realms and we must deal with them before we trace the main story of the period since the Armistice and the Peace of Versailles closed the war of 1914-18.

The growth of political consciousness in India and its provinces had gone fast in the first decade of the twentieth century. To some extent the concept of India as a whole had begun to make headway, but it still belonged only to some advanced sections of the literate classes and affected the ideas of most responsible Indians but little. They still were concerned only with the problems of their own provinces or states and their creeds or communities. The outbreak of war in 1914 very rapidly brought about great changes in this respect. Indian troops were called upon to undertake great tasks oversea in the Empire's cause, and for the Eastern theatres of war from the Suez Canal to Mesopotamia India was the base and the headquarters rather than the British Isles. The expeditionary forces brought together in a common effort men from many parts of India and the depredations of German cruisers in the Indian seas until they were chased down and destroyed made many Indians realise for the first time how their tranquillity and freedom

from external interference were dependent on the guard of the Royal Navy. The Princes offered their resources with an open hand, the fighting classes took up their arms with enthusiasm, while the people of every class from the literates and the merchants down to the inarticulate masses were inspired for the first time by a common feeling of solidarity and loyalty to the King-Emperor from one end of the peninsula to another. But the first flood of enthusiasm did not last at this high level; as the war went on and the hard and grinding task of waging it brought disappointment and reverses, the excitement waned, political divisions again raised their heads and India sank again almost into apathy.

Under the presidency of Sir P. S. Sinha, a Hindu statesman who had been the first Indian member of the Viceroy's Council and commanded respect both in Britain and India, Congress met at the end of 1915 and asked for a clear declaration of British policy upon the future of the Indian Empire and a statement of the ideals for which all Indians might work. Lord Chelmsford, who became Viceroy in 1916, deeply sympathised with this demand and pressed upon the Imperial Government the need to satisfy it, for the Morley-Minto reforms were clearly inadequate to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of responsible Indian public opinion. The extremists of the Congress were voicing demands of an exaggerated sort which were impossible, but the great mass of moderate opinion both Hindu and Muslim was moving towards practical aims of political progress which must be recognised if Britain were to fulfil her general promises of advance that dated back for two generations.

Accordingly in August 1917 the Secretary of State for India, Mr. E. S. Montagu, reaffirmed those promises unmistakably in terms that were generally accepted in Great Britain and had the weight of the whole nation behind them. He stated that it was the policy of the Crown in full accord with the Government of India to further "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," a statement that could hardly have been more definite.

The inclusion of representatives of India in the Imperial War Conferences of 1917 and 1918 was accepted by the Dominions and many difficulties as to the status of Indians in their communities

were tackled successfully and cleared up, save in South Africa where they persisted as a source of irritating trouble for some years longer. To translate into practical form the promise of political advance an enquiry was commenced in India by the Secretary of State and the Viceroy and the Montagu-Chelmsford Report was published in 1918. Parliament at once began to take action upon the Report by the appointment of a Select Committee representing all parties, and a measure was prepared for great constitutional reforms which became law as the Government of India Act, 1919. The pronouncement of the objective as the gratification of Indian aspirations for self-government was at first warmly welcomed in India as a recognition of the ideas of the Nationalists, but before long there was a radical divergence of views. Hindus and Muslims parted company and the old communal strifes broke out again. The Moderate parties left the Congress which fell into the hands of the extremists and took up vociferously their most outrageous demands. Thus when the time came to put into operation the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms there could hardly have been a more inopportune moment, and the new constitution came into effect in an atmosphere of strife and suspicion that promised ill for its success.

Though in every part of India the overwhelming majority of the people of all classes were loyal subjects of the King-Emperor there were traitors in many provinces whose plots were fomented and organised by spies and terrorists from outside. Most of them were financed by German money, but they found willing tools in the terrorists and extremists of whose existence we have spoken earlier. Economic conditions in India were very difficult during the war, the earlier excitement and enthusiasm had faded into disillusion and uneasiness and the hands of the Government were so full with their work in carrying on the war that the police had to shoulder an almost impossible burden. In the Punjab conspiracies were organised among the Sikhs with money brought from Sikh revolutionary groups in the United States; many of the younger Muslims were carried away by enthusiasm for the cause of the Caliph, the leader of Islam, who was the Sultan of Turkey, the ally of Germany and the apparently successful enemy of the King-Emperor. He had compelled the surrender of a great Indian army at Kut in the Mesopotamian campaign and his Turkish

armies with German advisers had repelled the attack of the British and the Anzacs on the Dardanelles and had forced them to retire. The Hindu terrorists in Bengal and the United Provinces and among the Marathas in the Bombay Presidency had never been entirely rooted out, so that, although they were everywhere but a tiny minority, they kept many parts of India in a ferment and it was only the unflinching loyalty of the Indian princes to their overlord that gave a ray of light in the gloom of those most difficult years. Such was the situation when the complicated and over-ingenuous schemes of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms were being worked out.

It is unnecessary to give more than an outline of the new Constitution to emphasise the great advance towards self-government that was the most striking aspect of the reforms. A new principle with the awkward name of Dyarchy was applied to the government of the provinces of British India where the most important forward step was made. In each of the larger provinces the departments of government were divided into two classes, the first "reserved," the second "transferred." The "reserved" departments were those of law and order (including the police), and revenue and finance. These were administered by the Governor-in-Council, i.e. the Governor appointed by the Crown with his nominated Executive Council including both Indian and British members, and the responsibility for the policy adopted and the decisions made was to the Government of India and so ultimately to the British Cabinet and Parliament. The other departments of government were transferred to the charge of Indian ministers who were responsible to the single-chamber elected legislature set up in the province. The "transferred" subjects were local government, education, sanitation and economic development and the initiation of policy concerning them and its carrying into effect were introduced by the ministers and debated in the legislatures in the same way as legislation and administration are dealt with in the British and Dominion Parliaments.

In the central Government of India changes were also introduced of a far-reaching effect, though there was there no dyarchy. The Viceroy's Executive Council, now of seven members, included three Indians in charge of departments and its powers of inter-

ference in provincial affairs were considerably restricted. The Executive Council was responsible to the Viceroy and the Secretary of State for India ceased to guide policy in the internal affairs of India as he had previously done, although his statutory power of control was undiminished. The central legislature was remodelled with two chambers, the Assembly and the Council of State. In the Assembly two-thirds were elected and one-third nominated to represent interests that would otherwise have had no voice. Of the elected members half were chosen by local constituencies on an extended franchise and the other half by communities or special interests. The Council of State was also partly elected on a narrow franchise, but it also contained a strong nominated element. The system was therefore one of "representative" not "responsible" government and resembled the old type of constitution that had prevailed down to the middle of the nineteenth century in the colonies. The responsibility of the Government of India was to the Crown in Parliament not to the Indian Central Legislature. This meant that the Government was always the object of criticism and that at any moment, if the non-official members combined together, it could always be placed in a minority. Power was reserved to the Viceroy, however, to take action on measures he deemed of necessary urgency, despite the adverse vote of the legislature. Similarly in the provinces the Governors could take action when it was deemed essential in order to carry on the government. The whole of the reforms afforded more opportunity for the education of the Indian electorate in political ideas that were quite new to them, but it inevitably afforded numberless opportunities for fault-finding and obstruction and the Government was always the whipping-boy. The critics were not compelled to restrain their opposition by their sense of reality as they are in a democracy, for they always knew that the Governors could take action independent of their ministers and the legislatures in case of emergency, in order to keep the machinery of government running.

To some who knew India well the reforms seemed very dangerous as entrusting power even in a limited sphere to an utterly inexperienced and uneducated electorate and as weakening the power of the central Government to intervene at moments of crisis. But the extreme radicals who had now secured control of

Congress and put themselves forward as the only patriots the reforms were the object of attack from exactly the opposite direction. Regardless of patent truths, they denounced them as evidence of the determination of the British Government to rivet the chains of tyranny on India for ever. So unmeasured was their denunciation and so exaggerated their language that it got quite out of contact with facts and realities and terrified moderate Indian opinion by the disturbances to which it gave rise which in some cases became so serious that the Government was compelled to administer certain localities under martial law for a time.

But the leadership of the Congress party was passing into the hands of an extremely shrewd and able leader who was convinced that violence would be fatal to further progress towards self-government and autonomy. Mr. M. K. Gandhi had first come to the front in South Africa before the war where he had led the Indians of Natal in a campaign of passive resistance against the Union Government to secure the redress of their grievances. He now advocated the adoption in India of a similar policy of passive resistance to the laws and conducted a furious agitation against the Government which despite his exhortations led to many serious outbreaks of violence. Under Gandhi's leadership the first elections to the new provincial legislatures were boycotted by the Congress party, and the new Indian ministries which came into power when the Assemblies first got to work in 1921 found comparatively little opposition while they were learning to handle the "transferred" departments. The Muslims had mostly parted company with the Congress party, and the outbreak of a grave Moplah rebellion among the fanatic Muslim population in south-western India seriously alarmed Hindu opinion. Drastic military action had to be undertaken to suppress the Moplahs, who had established a reign of terror over their Hindu fellow-subjects, and their atrocities drove responsible Muslims to realise the dangers of violence. Bitterness between Hindus and Muslims became so deep that any alliance between them was impossible and each saw the enemy in the other rather than in the Government which was striving to maintain order.

In 1922 Gandhi changed his passive resistance policy to all law for a policy of "civil disobedience" against such laws as he indicated, but this again led to outbreaks of violence in many

provinces, although the Congress leader always preached against any outbreak. The second elections were held in 1923 and the extremists then entered the legislatures with the declared object of preventing their functioning. They only succeeded in two out of the eight major provinces and there the Governors had to rule under their emergency powers, but elsewhere the Indian ministers could carry on under the system of dyarchy and were learning the business of government though in the face of great difficulties. The elections of 1926 were marked by many communal outbreaks between Muslims and Hindus of the more fanatic sort on either side, but the general mass of the population deplored them and gave them no support, while the extremists themselves broke up into rival groups which were as bitter against one another as they were against the constituted authorities. The disturbances were largely localised; they were characteristic especially in Bengal with its terrorist gangs and in Gujarat in Bombay Presidency where the extreme sections of the Congress party were in the ascendant. There was much unrest, too, on the North-West Frontier among the Muslim fanatics of the tribes, but as Turkey had given up the Caliphate and passed into a progressive republic they had no rallying ground for their religious enthusiasm and the disturbances were suppressed piecemeal and the borderland brought back to some semblance of order. To sum up, we may say that the whole decade after the introduction of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms was a time of grave and constant anxiety for the successive Viceroy, Lord Reading and Lord Irwin, who had by the exercise of patience and tact to steer a middle course between stern repression of disorder on the one hand and on the other weak compliance with the exaggerated demands made by vociferous demagogues. That they succeeded in averting any major danger is a testimony to the wisdom and sincerity of Britain's promises to help India along the road of political progress.

Meanwhile changes were taking place in the Native States. The Princes were uneasy at many of the measures of Indianisation in the services in British India and the conferment of responsibility upon elected majorities in the provincial legislatures to most of whose political doctrines they were profoundly opposed. The principle of government in every State was autocracy ranging from a benevolent and progressive attitude in the best-governed

and larger States to reactionary absolutism that tolerated many evils in the most backward because they were traditional and had persisted for ages. The Government of India only interfered when the misgovernment of a State became so flagrant as to be a menace to its neighbours or to public order, and progress therefore depended upon the Princes themselves and it depended therefore very largely upon the ability of individual rulers and the ministers they chose.

Under the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms a Chamber of Princes was set up to consider matters of common interest between British India and the Native States but it never performed any useful functions and some of the most important Princes stood aside from it. In 1927 at their request a Committee was appointed by the Crown to examine the relationship between the Native States and the Paramount Power and the economic situation which was rapidly changing in some of the more progressive States. Down to the first decade of the twentieth century by far the major part of India's external commerce both from British India and the Native States was carried on through the great ports, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras, Karachi and Chittagong, all of which were in British India, with highly organised regulations and customs officials to collect shipping dues and the tariff charges imposed by the Government of India. But certain States upon the seaboard began to open ports in their own territories where dues were much more lenient and the customs system was not properly organised. It was to deal with questions such as these that the enquiry was charged on the economic side. The Report of the Indian States Committee appeared in 1929 and its most important pronouncement which had the approval of the authorities was that the rulers of the Native States would not be interfered with so long as they governed well, a recognition and re-emphasising of the practice and conventions that had been followed during the century since the Governor-Generalship of Wellesley. The Princes were assured that they would not be deprived of their traditional rights and placed without their consent under the authority of ministers responsible to the electorate of a self-governing Indian "dominion." This assurance was regarded as a point of vital importance by the rulers of all the Native States and it did something to reconcile them to some of the other recom-

mendations that they disliked. It will be mentioned a little later how important a factor it has been in the further changes that were to be embarked upon in the next ten years.

Before we deal with them we must say something of the great economic development that had taken place in India since the beginning of the twentieth century. The introduction of the motor car on a large scale after the war years has played a vital part in increasing the mobility of the population and facilitating the transport of produce to the many new ports that were opened. The development of the road system has been of as great importance in bringing about changes in the life of Indian communities as were the railways at the middle of the nineteenth century. The peasants who form so large a part of the population of every province were no longer confined to their native villages but could travel and come into contact with others with all the broadening of outlook on affairs that that brings.

The finding of new and profitable markets for their agricultural produce has turned the minds of the cultivators towards improved methods of agriculture and they have begun to make far more use of the guidance of the systems of scientific help in the improvement of their crops and their live-stock at which they previously looked askance. With increased production which could be disposed of profitably there has been an increase of population attributable in part to a reduction in the rate of infantile mortality but also to increased fertility. This increased population has impeded the rise in the standard of living among the peasantry and that standard still remains deplorably low, but new desires began to appear for modern material appliances and there was an increased demand for manufactured goods which was partly supplied by increased imports but led also to a growth in Indian manufactures. These were no longer confined to the hand-workers in the villages and small towns; goods were produced in greater quantity in factories financed by Indian capital and managed by Indian overseers. These factories were usually set up in the greater towns and there was a great increase in the industrial population and the beginnings of industrial organisation with all its accompanying difficulties such as were seen in the countries of the west half a century earlier. Struggles over rates of wages and trade union agitation are a fertile forcing ground for advanced

political ideas and it was among the industrial population that the Congress politicians found much of the support to back their attack upon the constitution set up by the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms and by 1927 the agitation came to a head.

In the Government of India Act of 1919 it was expressly provided that within ten years after its passage the progress of the system should be examined. Accordingly in 1927 a Commission of Enquiry was appointed under the chairmanship of Sir John Simon, but in such a way as to offend even conservative Indian opinion. Whatever its terms of reference the extremists would have been certain to attack but it was undeniably maladroit to give them such an admirable handle as the phrase used in the terms of reference—to report “as to whether it is desirable to establish the principle of responsible government or to extend, modify or restrict the [existing] degree of responsible government.” Even Indians of moderate views seized upon these words as meaning that the British authorities had set up the Simon Commission as a step to recede from the liberal principles of the Montagu-Chelmsford constitution, and very serious harm was done by the over-legalistic caution of those who drew up the terms of reference without any regard for the extreme sensitiveness of Indian public opinion.

When the Simon Commission went to India in 1928 in pursuit of the thorough enquiries that had been begun in England they found themselves boycotted. Sympathetic strikes were organised by the Congress party wherever they went and in some cases rioting took place which gave much trouble to the police. However, after a time by the exercise of tact and extreme patience most of the Indian parties were persuaded to lift the boycott and answer the enquiries of the Commission so that it might be better informed in the work that it was trying to do to become acquainted with the real conditions of the problems of Indian government. There could be no doubt, however, even before the Report of the Commission appeared in 1930, that the enquiry had been a failure and that although the information it had acquired was of value there must be progress in a new direction and along different lines. The Commission's Report was greeted with a storm of disapprobation in every section of Indian opinion, and the Congress under Gandhi's lead embarked on a new campaign of non-

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co-operation with serious rioting and many bomb outrages. Apparently the situation was worse than ever.

Under these circumstances it was decided to summon a Round Table Conference in which representative Indians might meet with British statesmen on a footing of complete equality to thresh out together the main features of a new constitution. One very important result appeared from the reports of the various Committees of the Round Table Conference which were published in 1931, the focussing of opinion on the need for some sort of a federal solution to the problem of the relations between the Native States and British India, but at the end of the year the Prime Minister said that the division of opinion in the Conference was such that agreement was impossible on the three crucial points of the franchise, the finances of any federation that might be set up and the relations with the Indian States. It was the old communal strife that had not been reconciled and the Imperial Government had to determine on its own policy on the constitutional questions that had not yet reached some measure of agreement.

Another smaller Round Table Conference met at the end of 1932 and a third in 1933. The Imperial Government was now ready to prepare a complete scheme and their proposals were laid before a Joint Select Committee of both Houses of Parliament to be considered in consultation with representative Indian statesmen. After extremely exhaustive consideration by the Committee under the chairmanship of the Marquis of Linlithgow the proposals were shaped into the form of a bill and it was passed by both Houses as the Government of India Act (1935). Lord Linlithgow became Viceroy in 1936 and it was under his lead that the new reforms began in part on April 1st, 1937. Under the Act a transitional period was provided for until a full federal scheme could be embarked upon, and in 1940 the Central Government still remained under the provisions that were laid down to cover this transitional period.

The three main principles inspiring the Act may be summed up as (1) Provincial autonomy, (2) responsible government, and (3) All-India federation comprising both British India and the Feudatory States.

The provisions respecting the Provinces were brought into operation on April 1st, 1937, and these included responsible

government for all the larger provinces, but agreement concerning the All-India federation had not been reached when India along with the rest of the Empire-Commonwealth was again plunged into war in September 1939. The provisions for the Central Government were not brought into operation therefore, but its structure and operation remained as provided for during the transitional period. Our interest is thus mainly concerned with the reforms in the provinces.

Between 1826, when Arakan and Tenasserim were ceded by the kingdom of Burma after the first Burmese War, and 1937 Burma was governed as an integral part of British India, but its people and problems are so different from those of the peninsula that the arrangement always led to certain difficulties. By the Government of India Act of 1919 Burma was erected into a Governor's province and acquired a large measure of autonomy. On April 1st, 1937, it was entirely separated from the Indian Empire and governed as a distinct unit of the Empire-Commonwealth. Burma proper is ruled over by a Governor with a legislature consisting of two houses, the Senate and the House of Representatives. Half the Senate are elected by the House of Representatives and the remainder are nominated by the Governor. The House is elected by the people on a fairly wide franchise, and the ministers who carry on the government are chosen by the Governor on the principle of responsible government, though he has emergency powers to be used at his discretion. Political affairs in Burma proper have been marked by considerable difficulties since the new constitution came into operation and the Governor has had to make frequent use of his emergency powers. One of the principal causes of difficulty has been the dislike of the Burmese for the Indian immigrants who come from important communities in the great ports. There has been a strong nationalist and exclusive movement among the Burmese and its obstructiveness has made the course of government far from smooth, since it has coincided with a period of considerable economic unrest.

Besides the territory administered by the Burma Legislature and ministers there are under the Governor's administration the Shan States ruled over by their own chiefs under the guidance of British officials and federated for common purposes. There are also the Karen States under the direct rule of the Governor

through their chiefs, but they are not technically a part of Burma. In all these territories where the Governor is the administrator the problems are those of the ruling of comparatively primitive peoples and they lie apart from those of Burma proper with its responsible ministry.

Now turning back to the Indian Empire, we note that under the Government of India Act of 1935 there are two classes of provincial governments in British India: (a) the Governor's Provinces, (b) the Chief Commissioners' Provinces. These latter, which include British Baluchistan and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, as a rule offer special problems of the government of primitive peoples and in them the Chief Commissioners exercise administrative power under the Viceroy on traditional lines that are suited to the particular circumstances in each case. Their population in each case is small as compared with that of a Governor's Province and they do not afford a major problem of Indian politics.

The Governor's Provinces are units of enormous size and population and each of them has its own definite entity, based deep in historical causes. They are the Provinces of Madras Presidency, Bombay Presidency, the Presidency of Bengal, the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, Bihar and Assam, each of which has a Legislature of two Chambers, and the Punjab, the Central Provinces (including Berar), the North-West Frontier Province, Orissa and Sind, each of which has a single-chamber Legislature. The executive power in each province is exercised by the Governor. Where under the Act he has to exercise his individual discretion he does so under the control of the Viceroy and Government of India. His discretion is used when he is satisfied that an emergency has arisen in which the Government cannot be carried on according to the provisions of the Act.

In ordinary circumstances the Governor carries on his functions according to the advice of a Council of Ministers (i.e. a Cabinet) chosen from the members of the Provincial Legislature and responsible to it. In all the Governor's Provinces the representative Chamber is composed of members elected by constituencies some of which are geographical and others communal or representing particular interests. In some provinces there are a few nominated representatives, but this is not usual and as a rule they belong to the upper Chamber.

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When the new constitution came into operation the crucial question arose as to whether the Congress party which was in a majority in most of the provinces would consent to take office and exercise the usual functions of responsible government. As a rule there was no alternative to a Congress ministry available and until they consented to assume office the Governors had to carry on with their emergency powers, but during 1938 the situation was cleared up for a time and Congress ministers where they had a majority carried on the administration with the legislatures after the usual forms of responsible government. In 1939, however, acting on the resolutions of the Central Congress Committee the ministers belonging to that party resigned office in each province in turn and matters came back to where they had been in 1937. In those provinces where alternative ministries were possible the new form of responsible government continued, but elsewhere the Governors had to carry on with their emergency powers.

The difficulties that brought this unfortunate situation were concerned with the delay in reaching an agreed solution of the problems connected with the position of the Native States in an All-India Federation. Thus when war came again in September 1939 and in the following months the Central Government of India was still being carried on under the transitional provisions of the Act of 1935.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE MANDATED TERRITORIES AND THE COLONIES, 1920-39

IN the discussions of the Peace settlement in 1919 the representatives of the self-governing Dominions were particularly interested in the disposal of the former German colonies which had been occupied by the Allied and Associated Powers. According to the principles which had been formulated earlier it was generally agreed that whatever Power was entrusted with the administration of territories inhabited by primitive peoples should carry out that work not for its own purposes, whether political or economic, but as a trustee to watch over and promote the well-being of the native inhabitants. The earliest formulation of such ideas dates back to the time of Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton's Aborigines Committee which we discussed in an earlier chapter. The spirit of trusteeship had infused British colonial administration for many years and it was naturally fitting that the delegates representing the British Empire-Commonwealth should take a leading share in this part of the Peace Conference debates. To put the idea into practice an Article was introduced into the Covenant of the League of Nations setting forth that the tutelage of peoples not able to stand by themselves should be entrusted to advanced nations who by reason of their resources, their experience or their geographical position could best undertake this responsibility, and the tutelage should be exercised by those powers as "Mandatories" of the League, i.e. trustees carrying out their functions under the supervision of a Mandates Commission containing representatives of non-colonial Powers.

The ex-German colonies were all inhabited by backward peoples except South-West Africa where there was a considerable number of white settlers, partly of German and partly of Afrikaner origin. To deal with that region a special form of mandate was devised and entrusted to the Union of South Africa because from its geographical contiguity to the territory of the Mandatory it could best be administered as an integral part of the Union but subject to annual reports to the Mandates Commission. The

administration of this mandate has given rise to many difficulties, for while the native policy adopted has been that of the Union and has been administered without much friction, the government of the white settlers has led to much controversy especially since the coming of the Nazi regime in Germany. Attempts have been made to organise the Germans in the territory on nationalistic lines in opposition to the Union Government and only drastic action has kept this movement in check.

More and more South-West Africa has come to be governed as a detached province of the Union in accordance with the phrase in the mandate permitting its administration as "an integral part" of its territory. The laws of the Union have been introduced and the constitution is similar to that of a province of the Union. The powers of the Governor-General have been mostly delegated to an Administrator appointed by the Union Government and carrying on his work in close consultation with them. There is a legislature consisting of an Advisory Council and a Legislative Assembly elected by the inhabitants of European stock. The natives of Bantu stock have a tribal organisation like those in the neighbouring parts of the Union, but the Herreros, who were grievously oppressed under the German regime, then lost their tribal organisation and are now mostly gathered into native Reserves.

The mandates for the ex-German colonies in the tropics, with the exception of certain Pacific islands north of the equator which went to Japan, were entrusted to the British Empire or the Dominions, France and Belgium according to their geographical situation. Northern New Guinea, certain of the Solomon Islands, and the Bismarck Archipelago were entrusted under mandate to the government of the Commonwealth of Australia and what had been German (now called Western) Samoa to New Zealand. The small island of Nauru in the Pacific which is valuable only for its deposits of phosphate is administered under a mandate by Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand in agreement. Of the tropical mandated territories by far the most important are those in Africa. The greater part of the ex-German colonies in Togoland and the Cameroons were entrusted under mandate to France and the small portions under the British mandate were of no particular importance. It was far otherwise with the two-thirds of German East Africa which became the Tanganyika Territory which was

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mandated to Great Britain, the rest going to Belgium. We had always had an interest in that territory and its problems are very similar to those of the contiguous Kenya Colony. Its administration has since been carried on as an autonomous unit but on parallel lines to those in Kenya, and it is there that the mandatory system has been worked out to the full to further the well-being and progress of the native population. The term the "Dual Mandate" has been applied to the task by Lord Lugard, himself perhaps the greatest of our administrators of native peoples. Not only have we to lead the natives towards a better mode of life which can best be accomplished by fostering all that is good in their own social system without Europeanisation, but we have also to develop the lands in which they live. Those lands in colonies, protectorates and mandated territories alike already supply the raw materials of the tropics that are needed by the Western world, and they also form vast and slowly growing markets for our manufactured goods. By the proper fulfilment of our dual mandate we satisfy our duty as trustees and raise our own standard of life for the supply of new needs. The fats which are used for the manufacture of margarine, the fibres, the timbers, the cocoa, the cotton and numberless other commodities produced by the tropical territories are essential for the needs of our peoples and, if we can increase their production while safeguarding all that is good in native life, our dual task will be performed.

Turning now from the territories inhabited by the black races to the other territories which fell to be dealt with at the Peace and by the subsequent treaties, we find that the mandatory system as applied to those regions which had formed part of the Turkish Empire was very different from that in tropical Africa because the problems to be dealt with were far more complex. Cyprus, for which down to 1914 Great Britain had paid an annual tribute to the Sultan as still nominally a part of the Turkish Empire, was now definitely annexed as a British colony and did not fall to be dealt with by mandate. Mesopotamia was erected into the independent state of Iraq and placed under a British mandate. As such it remained until 1927 when a treaty was concluded by which Great Britain undertook to recognise Iraq as an independent state and to further its admission to the League of Nations. This was accomplished in 1932 and the mandate was terminated. This was

the achievement of the aim set out in the declaration of Great Britain and France at the time of the Peace Conference to establish a national government and administration drawing its authority from the initiative and free choice of the native population. Iraq is now an independent power in alliance with the British Empire.

Palestine was conquered from the Turks by British forces under General Allenby in 1917 and remained under military occupation until 1920. In 1922 the mandate was confirmed by the League of Nations by which Palestine was placed under the control of Great Britain, but its administration has given rise to very great difficulties. The difficulties have largely arisen from a declaration made by Mr. Balfour on behalf of the British Government in 1917 that Palestine was to be "a national home for the Jewish people." Jewish immigration began on a large scale and much economic development took place in some parts of the country, but this led to great uneasiness among the Arab population which despite all the assurances of the Mandatory Power feared expulsion from its native land. This unrest culminated in 1936 in a general Arab strike which was followed by outbreaks of physical violence, murder and intimidation. Considerable forces of British troops were sent to Palestine to restore order and Jewish immigration was strictly limited. But the feud between the Arabs and the Jews persisted, and the latter made representations to the Mandates Commission against the actions of the British administration. The difficulties had not been solved when war broke out in September 1939, though that brought a lull and by then the campaign of physical violence had been largely suppressed. New ordinances were promulgated at the beginning of 1940 forbidding further sales of Arab land in the greater part of the country and they were welcomed by the Arabs as safeguarding the position of the peasant cultivators. The Jews, however, protested loudly against the ordinances and the restriction of Jewish immigration and there was some division of opinion in Parliament upon the policy being pursued by the British Government.

Under the Palestine mandate there was also included the territory of Transjordan lying to the east, but the clauses relating to the establishment of a national home for the Jews were expressly stated not to apply to this territory. It was placed under the rule of an Amir belonging to the same family as the Muslim ruler of

Iraq and provisions were made for its government by an agreement signed in 1928. The British High Commissioner of Palestine holds a separate appointment as High Commissioner for Transjordan and he serves as adviser to the Amir and is represented by a British Resident who does similar work to that performed by the Resident in one of the larger Native States in India.

Down to the war of 1914-18 Egypt was still nominally under the suzerainty of the Sultan of Turkey, but in December 1914 this connection was proclaimed to be at an end and Egypt was declared a British Protectorate. The Protectorate was terminated in 1922 and Egypt became an independent Kingdom in alliance with the British Empire. There were many difficulties to be faced because Egyptian national sentiment strongly resented the continuance of the British military occupation.

However, in 1936 a treaty was concluded by which Egypt and Great Britain entered into an alliance under which the special British interests in the defence of the Suez Canal were recognised and provisions made for the employment of British military forces for that purpose. The hampering Capitulations, for the administration of justice in cases in which Egyptians and foreigners were concerned, were brought to an end by a Convention between Egypt and the Capitulatory Powers which was signed in 1937. Egypt has become a member of the League of Nations and is represented by envoys in foreign capitals like any other independent Power.

When the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan was reconquered from the tyranny of the Khalifa, the successor of the Mahdi who had revolted in 1882, it was placed under a condominium by an agreement of 1899 and by the Anglo-Egyptian treaty of 1936 this arrangement was continued. The country is ruled by a Governor-General appointed by Egypt on the nomination of the British Government and he carries on the administration by a Civil Service with British officials as Governors in the provinces into which the country is divided. The Sudan has made great economic progress under this regime and its administration according to the usual principles of British colonial government has restored order and contentment to the native inhabitants who suffered so grievously during the years of dervish tyranny.

It will have been noted how in the latter part of this book the term "colony" has come to be used in a different and more restricted sense from that which was used in the earlier part, and that corresponds to the changes that have come about in the course of our Empire history. Technically down to the early years of the twentieth century the "colonies" included every part of the King's realms save the United Kingdom (with the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man) and British India and this was legally stated by Act of Parliament in 1889. But the self-governing Dominions have repudiated the term "colony" and in practice it is now never applied to them. It is now solely employed for the territories whose affairs are dealt with by the Secretary of State for the Colonies. In 1925 the Dominions Office was separated from the Colonial Office and entrusted with the relations between the Government of the United Kingdom (sometimes referred to as the Imperial Government) and the Governments of the Dominions with which we shall deal in our next chapter. The Dominions Office under the Secretary of State for the Dominions deals with the business of the Imperial Conference, the self-governing Dominions (Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Eire), and Newfoundland, Southern Rhodesia and the South African territories which are not included in the Union. The affairs of India and Burma are dealt with by the India Office, but all the rest falls to the Colonial Office. We may say therefore that "colonial affairs" in the broad sense are those of territories which are dealt with by the Colonial Office and that no more accurate definition is possible than this severely practical one.

We have already dealt with the more recent developments of policy in relation to territories inhabited by native peoples who have not yet advanced far beyond the tribal stage, but we have said nothing about two colonies with special problems of their own which have demanded attention during the period since 1918. These are the colonies of Malta and Ceylon.

Malta became a part of the British Empire in 1800 by the free wish of its inhabitants when the French garrison who had seized it in 1798 were compelled to capitulate. The annexation was recognised by the Powers in the Treaty of Paris of 1814, and since that date Malta has been one of the most important strategic outposts of the Empire. The Maltese served the Empire well during the

war of 1914-18 and in 1921 a constitution was established by which considerable powers of self-government were given to an elected legislature. However, this arrangement did not work well and there were acute political divisions in the island and a good deal of intrigue by pro-Italian sympathisers. After various abortive amendments the constitution of 1921 was abrogated in 1936 and after that date the government was administered by the Governor with an Executive Council of five ex-officio and three nominated members, which arrangement was generally accepted. The dependence of the community on its work for the garrison and the navy makes it important that Malta should be governed as Gibraltar is in conformity with the strategic requirements of Imperial defence.

Another strategic point of great importance, Aden, has also problems of government that have needed special arrangements. Down to 1937 Aden was administered from India, but in that year it became a Crown colony under the Colonial Office and the Governor was also entrusted with the management of the affairs of the extensive Aden Protectorate and the Hadramaut stretching along the southern coast of Arabia, and the island of Sokotra. Aden itself is solely a port and garrison, but the protectorate comprises the territories of numerous Arab chiefs who have entered into treaty relations with Great Britain. They rule over their own people under the general supervision of the Governor and there is no interference with their internal affairs.

Between 1796 when a British force occupied the island and 1802 Ceylon was ruled from Madras, but since that date it has been a Crown colony without connection with India. But there has been a large Indian immigration into the northern part of the Colony and after 1920 there was great unrest among the Indian settlers in unison with the movements in India that were sponsored by the Congress party. Similar movements were started in Ceylon and there were demands for the application of similar reforms in the direction of self-government. In these movements the Sinhalese began to take part under leaders who had been educated in England and the government of the island was faced by many difficulties. Some modifications in the constitution were made in 1923, but they did not put an end to the agitation and in 1927 a Commission under the chairmanship of the Earl of Donoughmore

was sent to Ceylon to enquire into the situation and to make recommendations for further reform. Its Report appeared in 1928 and the new form of constitution recommended came into operation in 1931. It was planned on unfamiliar lines with a State Council elected on a wide franchise but also having a few nominated and official members. The functions of the State Council were to be both executive and legislative, the work of government being departmentalised under seven ministers, each assisted by a Standing Committee of the State Council, much after the fashion in which the business of the London County Council is transacted. From the beginning the system was unsuccessful. There was repeated friction between the Governor whose main purpose was to carry on the smooth working of the governmental machine and the politicians who wanted to see the establishment of autonomous self-government of the usual type with a ministry responsible to the elected legislature. In consequence of the continued agitation of the reformers the situation remained very critical and no solution had been reached when war broke out in September 1939.

In other colonies with an educated or semi-educated electorate, and notably in Jamaica, the years between 1930 and 1939 saw the rise of agitations for self-government on the Dominion pattern, even though outside observers were convinced that the communities were not strong enough to carry the burden of responsibility for finance and defence which must rest upon them. In the West Indies political circumstances were aggravated by social and economic distress and this led to the despatch of a Commission of Enquiry to the West Indies under the chairmanship of Lord Moyne. Their work had not been completed at the outbreak of war, but the evidence already presented to them had made it clear that the difficulties of the colonies had their roots in economic causes which were of world-wide effect on the producers of primary commodities. There and not in political machinery must be the improvement the colonies of this type needed.

There is one part of the Empire whose affairs fall to the Dominion Office which prides itself on the name "Colony" which other self-governing communities have repudiated. The political circumstances of Newfoundland since it first achieved representative government in 1833 have been similar to those of the other parts of British North America, but it has to face many

difficulties owing to its comparatively small population and its dependence on a single industry, the fisheries. After the clearing-away in 1904 of the obstacles imposed by the Treaty of Utrecht Newfoundland made considerable progress and the introduction on a large scale of the manufacture of pulp for paper from its forests aided in the diversification of its industries. But the finances of the colony in the twentieth century fell into a serious state and there were recurrent political crises sometimes of a very unsavoury kind. At the request of the colony's Government a Royal Commission was appointed in 1933 to enquire into these difficulties and make recommendations for their solution.

According to those recommendations the colony consented to a suspension of the self-governing constitution and under an Act of Parliament passed at the end of 1933 the United Kingdom assumed responsibility for the finances of Newfoundland. The Governor was placed in control of the administration, assisted by a nominated Commission, three members of which were Newfoundlanders and three from Great Britain. The business of government was carried on under the Commission during the succeeding years, but the affairs of the colony still remained in a state of acute depression and at the beginning of 1940 there were few signs of improvement. The solution of Commission government had not produced the desired effect and there was some desire in the colony for an immediate return to self-government on the old lines though this was not sufficiently influential to cause the repeal of the Act of Parliament under which the Commission had been established.

The diversity of conditions in the dependencies has attracted our attention in many of the chapters of our study, but here again we may remark upon them. They forbid any broad generalisations and emphasise the complexity of our imperial tasks.

CHAPTER XXV

THE EMPIRE-COMMONWEALTH AND THE WORLD, 1920-39

THE change in the relationship between the various parts of the Empire which was unmistakably revealed at the Peace Conference was no sudden revolution but the last stage in a process of political growth that had been going on for a century. It had reached maturity and there only remained to recognise it formally. The ten years between the signing of the Peace Treaties and the introduction of the Statute of Westminster saw the successive steps by which this recognition was completed in solemn legal form, while the following decade was marked by the equally important movement of economic and fiscal changes consequent upon the acceptance by Great Britain of the full policy of imperial preference and commercial regulation. The first process permits of exact description and was complete, the second involved constant changes and unceasing negotiations to deal with the practical circumstances of a world economic situation in a state of flux.

Separate representation at the Peace Conference was insisted upon on the ground that only those who were the chosen representatives of each Dominion could pledge it to accept whatever treaty was concluded. In December 1918 the Cabinet of the Dominion of Canada formally urged that the nations represented at the Conference "should recognise the unique character of the British Commonwealth composed of a group of free nations under one sovereign," each speaking with its own voice, though on occasion those voices might be raised in unison.

During the next two or three years the course of events emphasised the diversity of voices much more than their unison. After the enthusiasm and the exhausting efforts of the war there was a natural reaction. The statesmen of the Dominions had to devote the major part of their attention to the domestic problems of their own communities, and there was a noticeable tendency of public opinion to recede from a broad imperial outlook. Men were tired of concentrating upon great problems and they resented attempts

to force them to discuss further either world politics such as had demanded all their attention during the war years or the reform of the constitution of the Empire that in 1917 had been expected to be the most acute post-war topic.

The first important foreign business of the period in which the Dominions were especially concerned was the Naval Conference at Washington in 1921 which assembled on the invitation of the United States to discuss the limitation of naval armaments. At first Great Britain contemplated acceptance of the invitation on behalf of the whole Empire, but the Dominions were not satisfied with this proposal and insisted on separate invitations and the right to send their own delegates to represent them. This was agreed to despite the reluctance of France and other foreign Powers, and ultimately the Dominion delegates signed the resulting treaty as the equals of the United Kingdom. The next matter was more serious and was not merely a question of form. By the Treaty of Sèvres (1920) defeated Turkey was compelled to cede Smyrna to Greece, but patriotic Turks bitterly resented it and when there was a great nationalist revival under Mustapha Kemal (later Atatürk), they attacked the Greeks, severely defeated them and advanced into the neutralised zone round the Dardanelles where a British garrison was stationed at Chanak. The situation was very dangerous, and the Prime Minister, Mr. Lloyd George, proposed to take the advance as a challenge to the Powers who had recently been allies against the Turks. France and Italy, however, refused to take up arms again to assist the Greeks, and Great Britain was left to act alone. Under these critical circumstances Lloyd George made a somewhat hysterical appeal to the Dominions for support and received a severe rebuff. New Zealand promised what aid she could, Australia was very cool in the same sense and South Africa made no immediate reply. But Canada was frankly hostile to any participation. She complained that she had not been kept fully informed or consulted during the rapid progress of the crisis and Mr. Mackenzie King, the Canadian Premier, hardly concealed his opinion that the Foreign Office and the Cabinet were not abiding by the understanding about the responsibility of the Dominions in foreign affairs which had been accepted so recently. Luckily, however, things did not proceed to extremes; the situation was cleared up between the British commander on the spot

(Sir Charles Harington) and the Turks and the trouble was avoided.

The treaty of peace between Turkey and Greece was negotiated at Lausanne in 1923 but the Dominions were not invited to send plenipotentiaries to the Conference. They did not formally resent this or object to the terms of the treaty, but Canada would not bring it before the Canadian Parliament or give it ratification. She implied that as the United Kingdom alone had been engaged in the negotiations, it was her concern alone and interested the Dominions no more and no less than a treaty between, say, France and Spain. This incident was a definite practical illustration of the fact that the position of the Dominions relating to foreign affairs was no mere theoretical convention but a very real factor in imperial and international politics.

In 1923, too, there was another step forward in the acquisition of power for a Dominion to make treaties independently of the United Kingdom. The occasion concerned the fisheries of the North Pacific, which were of no direct interest to Great Britain. Only the United States and the Dominion of Canada were involved, and accordingly the negotiations were conducted between the Secretary of State as representing the United States and the Canadian Minister of Fisheries representing the King as sovereign of the Dominion. He was directly appointed on the recommendation of the Canadian Cabinet without consultation with Great Britain, and although the Colonial Office protested Canada repudiated the protest and the British ambassador in Washington did not take part as he had done on all similar occasions in the past. The resulting Halibut Treaty, as it is called, was ratified only by the legislature of Canada and the Senate of the United States and it did not come before the Parliament of the United Kingdom. Thus Canada had won her point, and though the treaty was of no particular importance it forms the complement of the Treaty of Lausanne as marking a distinct step forward in imperial relations.

It was in this difficult atmosphere that the time came to implement the resolutions that had been put forward by the Imperial War Cabinet and the Imperial Conference in 1917. The Resolution on the Constitution of the Empire declared that the constitutional relations of the component parts of the Empire should form

the subject of a special Imperial Conference to be summoned as soon as possible after the cessation of hostilities. The readjustment should "preserve all existing powers of self-government and complete control of domestic affairs and should be based upon a full recognition of the Dominions as autonomous nations of an Imperial Commonwealth."

The term "Dominion" that was employed in the Resolution has had an interesting history, for it has been employed since the Middle Ages to describe a detached portion of the King's Realms, like Wales. In the collective form it was vaguely inclusive of every part of the realms oversea, as in the phrase "the British dominions," but after the beginning of the twentieth century it acquired a restricted sense and in 1907 it was formally used to mean any self-governing part of the realms. Within the next year or two it was in frequent official use in this sense, but at the Conference of 1917 it had become more restricted but still could only be accurately defined by giving a list of the territories that were included. For the first time at the Conference there was indicated in the discussions the idea that these territories possessed common and exclusive characteristics and the phrase "Dominion status" was coined to apply to them.

The Conference of 1921 was reluctant to engage in the constitution-making that had been looked forward to in 1917. Besides the general weariness which made all theories suspect, the propaganda which had been ceaselessly pressed upon the public by the dogmatic advocates of a central imperial executive alarmed and bored the average citizen who dreaded outside dictation in his affairs. There was a general desire both in Great Britain and the Dominions to steer clear of the controversies that were bound to arise, and all the Conference agreed upon was a non-committal resolution in favour of continued consultation between the Prime Ministers, communicating directly one with another and meeting in conference at intervals.

The Imperial Conference of 1923 carried matters no further, but between its meetings and those of the next Conference in 1926 Dominion feeling was so stirred by the events that we described earlier that there was a determination in Canada and South Africa to put an end to vague conventions about Dominion status and get it expressed unmistakably. The sensitiveness of Canada

still believed that Downing Street was ready to meddle in Dominion affairs and that British advice had been thrust upon the Governor-General, Lord Byng, in the preceding June when he had refused a dissolution of Parliament to the Liberals and granted it immediately afterwards to the Conservatives. The belief was groundless, but there is no doubt that it coloured the thoughts with which Mr. Mackenzie King and the other Canadian delegates approached the questions of the Conference. The century-old distrust of the attitude of Downing Street officialdom has died very hard. The delegates from the newly-established Irish Free State came to the Conference in a very critical state of mind, and, since under the treaty of 1922 the status of the Free State was declared to be the same as that of the Dominion of Canada, they were ready to support the Dominion in demanding the recognition of its fullest nationhood.

It was felt that Dominion status ought no longer to be merely a matter of constitutional convention but must be accurately defined, and the Conference began that task of definition. A strong Committee was appointed under the chairmanship of Earl Balfour to examine the question of the relations between the various parts of the Empire, which were described as "inter-imperial," an inaccurate term which should more properly have been "intra-imperial," for they were relations *within* the Empire and not those between two or more empires. However, since the former phrase was commonly used, we may retain it here.

The Report of the Committee was of fundamental importance in our constitutional growth, for it set itself to define clearly though not in strictly legal language the position and mutual relations of Great Britain and the self-governing communities within the Empire. The essential points were included in the following Balfour Declaration, as it has been called, to which the Report gave great prominence :—

The United Kingdom and [the Dominions] "*are autonomous Communities within the British Empire, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.*"

This definition, clear as it seemed to be, was differently inter-

preted by those who co-operated in drawing it up, and there has been much discussion in subsequent years as to its implications without reaching any common agreement. There was no exact and legal definition of "Dominion status," and the Committee did not attempt to make one, for it was felt that the Empire must preserve the flexibility of its machinery which can be adapted from time to time to the changing circumstances of the world. The essential thing was that each of the associated communities had an equal right to complete autonomy, that is to say an equal right to equal rights, though it lay with each to decide how far it would exercise those rights. In fact, in the opinion of the Committee the self-governing communities had in all vital matters reached their full constitutional development. The process of growth which has been our constant underlying theme in these pages had reached its culmination.

To interpret the Declaration in relation to practical matters required much further work, but it is impossible here to trace the many detailed legal discussions which that involved. For the constitutional lawyer they were of very great interest, but for the general historian it is sufficient to remark that they were necessary. The legal and non-legal inequalities between the Dominions and the United Kingdom which needed reform were discussed in a Conference on the Operation of Dominion Legislation, etc., in 1929 which presented its report at the beginning of 1930. The recommendations were accepted by the Imperial Conference which met later in the same year, and the detailed legislation which they required was undertaken in the following sessions of Parliament.

The Imperial Conference of 1930 met in the early months of a world-wide economic depression that brought about vital changes in the United Kingdom and the Dominions, and the constitutional questions that we have been considering were quite overshadowed in the minds of ordinary citizens by economic matters. The Labour Party was in office in the United Kingdom and the Chancellorship of the Exchequer was filled by Mr. Philip Snowden who held Free Trade doctrines of the most uncompromising Cobdenite sort. In his fiscal policy it is fair to say that he was the residuary legatee of the Gladstonian Liberals of the 'eighties, and like them he was bitterly opposed to imperial preference.

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His opposition and his expressed determination to remove even the slight contributions to a system of preferential duties that had been made by the United Kingdom brought the 1930 Conference very near to disaster, for the Dominion representatives whose views were eloquently voiced by Mr. R. B. Bennett, the Prime Minister of Canada, were profoundly convinced that in a world sunk in the most disastrous commercial depression of the century the only hope of salvation for the Empire-Commonwealth was to be found by encouraging closer economic relations between its various parts. To achieve that, it was essential that the United Kingdom should make a great advance along the road to imperial preference that the Dominions had followed since the 'nineties. But that meant a breach with the Cobdenite tradition of free imports, as Joseph Chamberlain had proclaimed, and Snowden would have none of it. Mr. Bennett only saved the Conference by getting it to refer economic questions to an adjourned Economic Section of the full meeting to be summoned to meet at Ottawa within twelve months.

That gave a breathing space, and before the twelve months had expired there was an epoch-making overturn in British politics. In August 1931 the imminence of a national financial crisis drove the Labour Government from office and broke up the party. Ramsay Macdonald retained the Premiership of a National Government supported by the whole Unionist party and a majority of the Liberals and of Labour. Neville Chamberlain became Chancellor of the Exchequer and with the whole-hearted support of Mr. Stanley Baldwin, he embarked upon a fiscal revolution which completely overturned the Free Trade policy to which Great Britain had adhered for ninety years.

The change was effected by the Import Duties Bill which passed through all its stages with very large majorities in February 1931, and a general tariff of duties on imports at once came into force. One of the purposes of the Act was stated to be to facilitate the granting of fiscal preferences to goods from other parts of the Empire, and it was agreed that no duties should be levied upon imports from the outer Empire until after the negotiations at the forthcoming Ottawa Conference.

Owing to the changes in Great Britain that Conference could not take place until 1932, and meanwhile Parliament turned

again to the constitutional question. Though in the course of a century and a half of development since 1783 the Parliament of the United Kingdom had legally delegated many of its powers to other legislatures in the Empire, it was still technically omniscient and it was essential therefore that the new arrangements should be legalised by a Statute of the Imperial Parliament. The Dominion Parliaments discussed the proposed reforms and passed resolutions requesting the Imperial Parliament to legislate upon the lines laid down. In the King's Speech opening the Session in November 1931 it was stated that a measure would be introduced to give statutory effect to certain of the resolutions of the Imperial Conferences of 1926 and 1930 so as "to make clear the powers of Dominion Parliaments and to promote the spirit of free co-operation amongst Members of the British Commonwealth of Nations." The measure was debated by both Houses and after certain amendments was passed and received the Royal Assent on December 11th, 1931. It came into immediate effect as the Statute of Westminster and is the fundamental constitutional document of the Empire-Commonwealth.

The provisions of the Statute contained nothing new but were purposed to commit the British Parliament to make a formal record of generally recognised constitutional conventions governing the established position, which it was thought would thus be firmly secured. The power of the Parliament of the United Kingdom to legislate for the Dominions was recognised, but it was enacted that "in accord with the established constitutional position no law hereafter made by the Parliament of the United Kingdom shall extend to any of the said Dominions as part of the law of that Dominion otherwise than at the request and with the consent of that Dominion." As we shall see in a moment, it was not long before this provision was applied in a matter of first-rate importance, but before we refer to it, we must note two other parts of the Statute.

No criteria were laid down to decide what was or was not a "Dominion" but instead the territories included under the term as employed in the Statute were expressly enumerated. "In this Act the expression 'Dominion' means any of the following Dominions, that is to say, the Dominion of Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, the Dominion of New Zealand, the Union of

South Africa, the Irish Free State and Newfoundland." Thus the traditional British practice was adhered to of dealing practically with the matter in hand without entering into debatable matters of theory.

The Monarchy is the sole remaining institution which is common to all parts of the Empire-Commonwealth. The maintenance of the Crown was accepted as essential and of equal concern to all, and this was laid down in the Preamble to the Statute. "Inasmuch as the Crown is the symbol of the free association of the members of the British Commonwealth of Nations, and as they are united by a common allegiance to the Crown, it would be in accord with the established constitutional position of all the members of the Commonwealth in relation to one another that any alteration in the law touching the Succession to the Throne or the Royal Style or Titles shall hereafter require the assent as well of the Parliaments of all the Dominions as of the Parliament of the United Kingdom." This convention was supplemented by the clause of the Statute which provided that no Act of the United Kingdom should extend to a Dominion as part of the law of that Dominion unless it was expressly declared in that Act that that Dominion had requested and consented to the enactment thereof.

It was not long before the crucial test was applied to the strength of this as the base on which the whole structure of the Empire-Commonwealth rested. In 1935 King George had reigned for twenty-five years and his Silver Jubilee was celebrated with universal rejoicing throughout the Empire. In the following year George V died and was succeeded on the throne by his eldest son as King Edward VIII, but before the close of the year it was announced that he proposed to contract a marriage of which his ministers could not approve. The Prime Minister, Mr. Baldwin, informed Parliament on December 3rd, 1936, that the Imperial Government was not prepared to introduce legislation to enable the King to marry without his wife becoming Queen, which was universally unacceptable. Immediate consultation with the Dominions took place and a week later the King announced to Parliament his decision to abdicate. A bill was introduced to give effect to this declaration of abdication and at once passed through all its stages. The machinery that we have been describing had to

be brought into operation to apply His Majesty's Declaration of Abdication Act to the Dominions and consequently the Government of Canada formally requested that its application to Canada should be included in the bill as presented to Parliament, and in 1937, when the Dominion Parliament met, this decision was ratified by a Canadian Act. The Government of South Africa signified its assent to the abdication, but the Prime Minister, General Hertzog, was of opinion that the next heir, the Duke of York, succeeded automatically as King George VI, and he did not wish to apply the United Kingdom Act. Consequently in 1937 the Union Parliament passed its own Act validating the succession of George VI from the moment of Edward VIII's signature of his Declaration. The Irish Free State also did not wish the United Kingdom Act to apply and passed its own Act, the Executive Authority (External Relations) Act, through its legislature. The assent of Australia and New Zealand extended the British Act to those Dominions and this was later accepted by their legislatures. These details may appear technical and unnecessary for recapitulation here, but they are of significance for the general reader as indicating the considerable differences existing in constitutional practice in the various Dominions and as showing that there is no rigid or theoretical uniformity in Dominion status.

These differences had already been emphasised in South Africa in 1934 when after considerable debate the Status of Union Act was passed to adopt the Statute of Westminster as an Act of the Union Parliament and to declare "the status of the Union of South Africa as a sovereign independent state." Accordingly certain amendments of a technical character were made in the South Africa Act of 1909 and the whole matter was brought more within the sphere of strict law than in the other Dominions where it still remains based to some extent upon convention.

There is one point of considerable practical importance that was dealt with in the reforms of the period from 1926 onward to which we have not yet referred. This was the position and method of appointment of the Governor-General in a Dominion. Down to 1926 he was appointed by the King on the advice of the Imperial Government, i.e. the Cabinet of the United Kingdom. From that date onwards in accordance with the resolutions of the Imperial Conference he was no longer the representative of the British

Government in the Dominion or the channel through which its opinions were conveyed to the ministers of the Dominion. He is the representative of His Majesty alone and a High Commissioner is appointed in each case to perform the functions of communication between the two Governments. At the Imperial Conference of 1930 it was declared that the Governor-General of a Dominion should be appointed on the advice of His Majesty's ministers in that Dominion who make a formal recommendation after informal consultation. Since the Governor-General must act in concert with his ministers in the same way as the Sovereign does in the United Kingdom, and since this involves a great deal of political experience and judgment, the choice of a suitable person to fill the office is a very considerable personal responsibility resting upon the King. He must help his ministers in the Dominion to make a suitable recommendation without trying to influence them unduly. There have been occasions since 1926 when the exercise of this duty has given great concern to the King who by his intimate knowledge of political and social life was aware of what could not be known in the Dominion and who had tactfully to guide his ministers in their recommendation. Such matters of high politics cannot be discussed in open debate and this mere reference to them must be sufficient to show that the King is no mere cipher or figure-head in the government of the Empire, but performs functions of very great and critical importance, which are certainly more onerous than they were before 1926.

Returning now to the adjourned Economic Section of the Imperial Conference which met, as we have stated, under the presidency of Mr. R. B. Bennett, the Canadian Premier, at Ottawa in 1932 we may note that it was attended by delegations from each of the Dominions, from India and certain other parts of the Empire as well as from the United Kingdom. Each was headed by a political minister but they were mainly composed of experts, for what was needed was an intimate knowledge of the intricacies of inter-imperial and world commerce and finance. The delegation from the Irish Free State did not take part, but the rest of the Conference entered into a long series of negotiations about particular problems that were carried on mainly between the parties interested in each. On general principles there was agree-

ment, but the applications of those principles involved hard bargaining usually of a most technical sort. There was some disappointment at the results obtained, and this was increased later as the Ottawa Agreements came to be applied by the Governments concerned. The Agreements were bi-lateral bargains between Great Britain (now fully converted to Imperial Preference), India, Southern Rhodesia and each of the Dominions, each acting separately, and between various of them with one another. The difficulties arose from the fact that whereas the outer parts of the Empire were all mainly concerned with their share in supplying foodstuffs to the market of the United Kingdom, Great Britain had to concern herself with her markets, not only with selling her manufactured goods within the Empire but also with her essential customers and suppliers in foreign countries. The questions to be solved were of extreme complexity, for not only were the Dominions concerned with their exports, they had also to deal with the demands of their own manufacturers for protection of their domestic markets against British imports which were often better and cheaper than the local product. These questions defy summarisation, for they were a multitude of special instances, and all we can say is that in the seven years between the Ottawa Agreements of 1932 and the outbreak of war in September 1939 there was incessant discussion between the parties concerned and repeated modifications of tariffs and regulations to meet the ever-changing conditions of world commerce.

A full Imperial Conference met again in 1937 at the time of the Coronation of King George VI. It was mainly concerned with Imperial defence and strategy and the ways in which each member of the Commonwealth could best co-operate for the security of the whole in the rapidly deteriorating situation of international politics. The part played by the Dominion representatives in the successive meetings of the Assembly and Council of the League of Nations had been a prominent one and they had gained a much deeper insight into the troublous intrigues of European politics, and the ministers whom certain Dominions had appointed to various foreign capitals were able to keep their Cabinets much better informed of what was going on than even the most ample confidential communications from the British Foreign Office

could have done. The Dominions were willing that Great Britain should continue to play the leading part in the conduct of foreign affairs because of her experience and the skill and judgment of her statesmen and diplomats in the European sphere from which they felt so far-removed. There was no longer the old fear of being pledged despite their wishes to action of which they had not approved, and, generally speaking, the attitude of Great Britain to the foreign problems of the time was approved. There was a widespread feeling in the Dominions, however, that the British Cabinet were too patient with the dictators who were becoming more and more aggressive as the months went by. But Neville Chamberlain's attempt to secure a settlement at Munich in September 1938 was approved, and when Germany repudiated her solemn promises and proceeded to flagrant aggression against Czecho-Slovakia, Canada, Australia and New Zealand at least were whole-hearted in their support of Britain's determination to re-arm.

Not only were the ministers of the Dominions far more closely in touch with world affairs than their predecessors had been in 1914, public opinion throughout the Empire was infinitely better informed by the radio and the foreign correspondence in the Press, and thus when war came in September 1939 there was an overwhelming support to the determination to stand side by side with the United Kingdom and France for the defence of the common ideals of liberty, justice and fair dealing. Canada, Australia and New Zealand were instant in action, and only in South Africa was there some opposition to the proposal to take up arms. But General Hertzog was driven from office and with General Smuts again as Prime Minister the Union of South Africa entered the struggle side by side with the other Dominions. India and the colonial dependencies joined in with almost universal approval, and only Eire (as the Irish Free State was now called) stood aside in professed neutrality.

The unity of the Empire-Commonwealth which had so triumphantly stood the test of 1914-18 was once more abundantly vindicated and the King's realms rushed to support the cause with all their resources. The years since 1920 had seen the removal of every legal tie and every vestige of centralised control over the members of the Commonwealth. Only the ties of common

allegiance to the Crown remained, but they stood as a symbol, as had been proclaimed in the preamble to the Statute of Westminster, a symbol of the common ideals of the Empire-Commonwealth to which they had attained in all their full development during the century we have been studying. Statesmen, poets and writers have endeavoured time and time again to express those ideals in lofty and moving language and sometimes they have succeeded and their phrases move our hearts. But to one person at least the cardinal ideal of the Commonwealth may be more simply phrased in the command of the Master :

“ Do unto others as you would they should do unto you.”

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

THE subject covered in this book is so wide and the literature dealing with various parts of it so extensive that a short book list would be misleading and valueless. It would necessarily have to leave large parts of the subject untouched, partly owing to the demands of space and partly to the fact that comprehensive studies of them do not exist. Though there are many histories of particular dominions and of India, there is no comprehensive history of the Empire as a whole save one, which in 1940 carried the story down to 1870.

This is *THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY of the BRITISH EMPIRE* (ed. Rose, Newton, Benians). Attached to each volume are exhaustive bibliographies of the subjects there dealt with and these give full and well-arranged lists of the original authorities, monographs and secondary works about them. Those who wish to undertake further reading cannot do better than consult these bibliographies: Vol. ii covers the General history of the New Empire 1783-1870; Vol. iii the history of the Empire-Commonwealth, 1870-1939 (in preparation in 1940). The other volumes deal with the history of India and of particular dominions; Vols. iv and v, India; Vol. vi, Canada and Newfoundland; Vol. vii Part i, Australia; Vol. vii Part ii, New Zealand; Vol. viii, South Africa. The lists of books relating to the Dependencies are to be found in the general volumes ii and iii.

Practically the whole literature of the subject is to be found in the specialised Library of the Royal Empire Society, Northumberland Avenue, London, W.C.2, whose catalogue forms a useful bibliographical guide.

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